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THE

LIFE OF CHRIST,

A POEM.

VOL. I.

THE

LIFE OF CHRIST,

A POEM:

ORIGINALLY WRITTEN

BY THE REV. SAMUEL WESLEY,

VICAR OF EPWORTH IN LINCOLNSHIRE,

Father of the late Rev. and venerable JOHN WESLEY:

CORRECTED, ABRIDGED, ENLARGED BY MUCH ORIGINAL MATTER, AND PRESENTED TO THE PUBLIC IN AN ALMOST ENTIRE NEW DRESS,

BY THOMAS COKE, LL. D.

OF THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR DR. T. COKE,

AND TO BE HAD OF THE REV. MR. BLANCHARD, 14, CITY ROAD; AND

Of all the Methodist Preachers in Great Britain and Ireland.

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PREFACE.

THE Poem, which is here presented to the reader, was originally written by the Rev. SAMUEL WESLEY, the venerable parent of the late Rev. JOHN WESLEY, whose extraordinary life has rendered his name more universally known than that of his father. It was first published towards the close of the seventeenth century, and soon passed through more than one edition. This, which is now before me, was printed in 1694. For some time it obtained no inconsiderable degree of notice, from those who feared God, and felt an attachment to the interests of the gospel; but having lived its day, it retired into the shades, and remained in that condition almost forgotten and unknown. More than a century has now elapsed

since the mantle of oblivion has been drawn over it; and but few, perhaps, comparatively speaking, know that such a poem ever existed.

The interesting title which this volume bore, and still continues to bear, was that which first excited my attention, and induced me to examine and analyze its several parts. On opening it, the Pindaric stanzas which begin the VIth book (but which now make the conclusion of it,) and assert the divinity of our Lord, were the first which claimed my attention. And being forcibly struck with the boldness of thought, and propriety of expression, which the poet had there introduced on the most sublime of all occasions, I was induced to examine the whole with greater earnestness, than the promiscuous perusal of any other parts would probably have excited. For in the prosecution of this disquisition I had the mortification to find, that the execution of the work at large, instead of bearing a resemblance to that part which first caught my eye, almost formed a contrast with it. And if nothing further had appeared to reward me for my toil, the volume would

have been again consigned over to that oblivion in which I found it. The event, however, proves that this was not the case.

The subject itself, of which the poem professed to treat, was awfully important, and could not fail to be in the last degree interesting. The life of our blessed Lord, I was convinced, furnished an inexhaustible fund of the richest materials; and displayed a variety of scenes which gave room for the poet to introduce every virtuous and vicious passion, and to exercise his utmost powers to excite those hopes and fears which operate so powerfully on the human mind. These valuable materials I found the poet had carefully collected, with a sedulity that surpassed my expectation; and arranged them with a degree of art, that nothing but the hand of a master could reach. In surveying the character of Christ, as here delineated, no remarkable incident of his life, from the cradle to his cross, was found to have been omitted: nay, if we even take a still wider range, every event of moment was noticed, from the espousals

were ascribed, were always adequate to the accomplishment of those deeds which were performed.

But, few contrasts, amidst the brilliancy of these scenes, appeared more conspicuous, than that which the design of the work, and the execution of it, exhibited. The former discovered a mind as comprehensive as the scheme which it had formed; and the latter, a crudity of expression which gave to the lines a disgusting appearance, and an offensive sound. The numerous abbreviations of words, which, in combinations that might easily be attained, would have been rendered wholly unnecessary—the barbarous accentuation to which others were obliged to submit —the unreasonable disproportion of expletives, which were introduced to preserve versification at the expence of harmony and elegance—and the numerous triplets, and unmeaning alexandrines, which neither gave vigour to the sentences, nor terminated the sense of them,—were defects of a nature sufficiently important to outweigh those excellencies which could not fail to charm. To

these may be added the obsoleteness of numerous terms which sprinkled the work with an affected hoar of antiquity, while it injured those ideas which were intended to be conveyed;—the contraction of some subjects which should rather have been amplified than curtailed;—and the dilation of others, that might have been wholly suppressed without occasioning any deficiency. And finally, in many instances, the characters were badly supported, and in several places the poet so sunk beneath his original, that he actually impaired that beauty which his admirable design might invite him to endeavour to improve.

On comparing those excellencies with these contrasted defects, I found much to admire, and much to condemn. The former admitted of little amendment, and required no commendation; and the latter scarcely allowed of apology. The great difficulty, therefore, consisted in separating the ore from the dross—in preserving the design, without perpetuating its wretchedness of execution. This separation is now attempted; but on the manner in which it is accomplished, it is not for

me to decide. On certain points, however, I feel myself at liberty to speak; and conceive that I only discharge a duty in complying with the requests of all who have a right to ask—"What parts of the work remain entire, and what changes have the others undergone?"

The original plan of Mr. S. WESLEY remains unaltered, except in the VIth book. The very long conversation between Gamaliel and the Centurion concerning the Heathen mythology, and the debate between St. James and St. Paul (then persecuting Saul of Tarsus) on the Jewish traditions, are entirely dropped. They discover great learning and ingenuity, but are very tedious, and more proper for a treatise in prose, than for a poem. These circumstances have obliged me to make several alterations in the division of the Vth and VIth books. In every other respect the original design has neither received additions nor suffered diminutions. Every character is preserved, and no new one is introduced to bear the others company. These fill the places they originally filled, and sustain their primitive relations to

one another. Hence the Contents which precede each book, the VIth excepted, are preserved, without undergoing any alterations but such as are of a verbal nature. A considerable part also of the Notes which were subjoined to each book, continue nearly as they were. Many however have been expunged, because the changes which have been made in the versification have rendered them totally unnecessary.

In the poem itself, however, the variations are considerable. Most of the triplets have been destroyed, and most of the useless alexandrines, have been reduced to the common standard of heroic measure. The numerous expletives have been discarded. For abbreviated words, others of a full sound have been substituted; and none have been either retained or introduced, that would not bear their proper accents. The obsolete phrases which occurred have been set aside, unless some obvious circumstance pleaded in their behalf; but these instances have been very few. Such subjects of investigation as appeared irrelevant—such allusions as were local—such comparisons as were indiscreet

—and such illustrations as were deemed unappropriate, have been rejected. And where a redundance of expression had been employed on topics that were unimportant, it has been contracted, to bear a proportion to the article under consideration. These are circumstances which have led to the introduction of changes that in the aggregate have been very considerable. But there is another incident which has tended still more powerfully to swell the additions that have been made.

The amazing magazine of materials which the author had collected, seems to have opened upon him with greater rapidity than he was capable of bearing, and to have profusely poured out more stores than he was able to adjust. His thoughts frequently outran his expressions; and sometimes so crowded themselves in a single line, that they obscured each other, or buried themselves in the shadows which they raised; on which account they presented to the reader, at the first view, little less than a mass of confusion. Of this the author appears occasionally to have been aware. Hence in many places the more prominent features only

were touched; while such as were of a more diminutive nature were passed over in total silence. This method of proceeding prevented indeed the former error from recurring, but it tended to introduce others which were equally injurious to the performance. By this mode, the propositions became straggling; and, for want of those intermediate links, which should have connected the whole together, the paragraphs, sentences, and lines, appeared to teem with insulated facts. These circumstances rendered it necessary to divide those clusters which crowded upon each other, and to supply those deficiencies which had been strangely occasioned by redundance.

Through these causes the poem (the VIth book, of course, excepted) has been considerably enlarged, notwithstanding the excisions which have taken place. Each book has received an addition of lines; several, of some hundreds; so that the whole has acquired not less than two thousand, besides those which have supplied the places of such as have been lopped off. Besides these lines which are additional, others are equally new, even

where the original ideas have been rigidly preserved. For it frequently happened, that the removal of a barbarous or prosaic line induced an alteration in those which were connected with it; and this oftentimes continued till the recurrence of some strange abbreviation renewed the necessity of a change. On these accounts, very few of the original lines are now standing. Those parts which are pindaric, form the principal exception; but these are very small. In most other respects the versification may be said to be new; and the thoughts, which were originally in the poem, are placed in such combinations, as appeared to express the ideas intended to be conveyed by them in the most perspicuous manner; so that in some places a transposition even of whole paragraphs has been made. In short, it is an old poem cast into a new mould.

Whether, through these alterations and additions, the poem has acquired any advantages which may be deemed considerable, is a question which others must determine. The writer flatters him-

self, that on a comparative estimate they will be found not unworthy of regard. But he does not profess himself to be a particular favourite of the muses. Parnassus is a mount which he never intended to ascend. His tale on the present occasion is short and simple. He saw this poem of Mr. Wesley, the plan and design of which he thought to be excellent, but the lines appeared to be very bad. He has therefore endeavoured to mend what he has preserved, and to supply what he thought to be deficient.

But though he may not have succeeded equally to his wishes, the importance of the subject he hopes will apologize with such as have the interests of religion at heart, for its being again presented to the world. If these receive benefit by what he has done, the consideration will heighten his satisfaction, as much as it will lessen his solicitude about the opinions of the rest of mankind. It is with a design to promote the spiritual welfare of the pious that he has revised the present work, and to them it is primarily offered.

There is perhaps no species of writing more entertaining than that of biographical narrative; but its utility must in no small degree depend upon the character of him who becomes the subject of historical relation. This must always form the criterion, when the writer presents to the world a faithful delineation. An individual, who has been renowned for probity and virtue, may become an example to thousands, who may view him as a pattern worthy of imitation; and his history may diffuse virtues through various departments of life, to which our calculations cannot reach. But if these remarks are forcible as they apply to mere mortals, what additional energy must they not acquire when applied to our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ? His whole life was replete with wonders, and the most exalted virtues; and on these accounts was most worthy of being recorded, and most admirably adapted to receive the embellishments of poetical diction. Through this medium, the same truths may become to many more impressive, than when deli-

vered in prose, and are more easily retained by the memory than when they are communicated in any other way.

It has been said by Aristotle, Bossu, and others, that "fable is a necessary ingredient in epic "poetry." This no doubt is true, when the heroes brought on the stage are only of a common stature, and can perform nothing more than mere mortal exploits. But in the character of our Lord, we find every thing in most glorious reality which useful fable can be supposed to supply. The miracles, which, in other poems, the invention of the author creates imaginary beings to perform, are here founded in sacred truth, and the interposition of real invisible agents. The ground therefore on which fable delights to take its stand, is already occupied by most sublime facts; and in proportion as an exchange is made between them, the whole historical relation must suffer disadvantages. Epic poetry can therefore never be in want of fable, while fact and incident can furnish all that is necessary. Indeed, "to mingle falsehoods,

(as Mr. Wesley has observed,) or dull and legend-
" ary fictions, which have neither life nor soul
" in them, with the blessed gospel of our Saviour,
" is, in some sense, to make them superior to it.
" But certainly, expressing the truth in parables,
" and mingling these with the mysteries of the
" gospel, cannot be thought to give it an air
" of fiction; nor dare any one to affirm that it
" does without blasphemy, since our Saviour has
" so often done it."

It has been said, that

" The gospel offers nothing to our thoughts,
" But penitence and punishment for faults."

But such as are acquainted with its history know that " it brings life and immortality to light," and that it opens " a new and a living way into the " holiest by the blood of Jesus;" and such as have felt its spiritual influence, experience that " it is " the power of God unto salvation." We know that it holds out the noblest examples, the most exalted motives, and the most glorious rewards; and affords sublimer instances of benevolence,

friendship, magnanimity, and heroic suffering, than any other real history, or even fable, can produce. "It shows us (says Mr. Wesley) a God really "descending, disrobed indeed of all his more "dazzling and insupportable glories, but yet "clothed with what has more of true divinity;— "with condescension, and charity, and patience, "and meekness, and innocence." The gospel not only points out to us what we are, but also what we should be; and furnishes the means through which the highest degree of moral excellence may be attained. In fine, it is replete with every blessing, and contains the last and greatest gift that ever God bestowed upon mankind.

If we look to the Lord Jesus Christ, we behold in his life and death those transcendent excellencies, which at once excite our astonishment, our gratitude, and our love. If we advert to his words, we must be convinced that "he spake as never "man spake;" and if we look to his actions, we behold him "fulfilling all righteousness," and "magnifying the law, and making it honourable." If we recur to his power, we find that "in him

"escape the corruptions that are in the world "through lust." But "through Christ strengthening us, we can do all things." Through the light of his truth, and the influence of his Holy Spirit, we may be prepared for "an inheritance "that is incorruptible, and undefiled, and that "fadeth not away." That these happy effects may result from this representation of the "Life "of Christ," is the earnest prayer of

THOMAS COKE.

DUBLIN,
July 15, 1809.

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THE

LIFE

OF

CHRIST.

BOOK I.

I Sing the God, who, though enthron'd on high,
In human nature deign'd to live and die:
I sing the God each modest Seraph sings,
The most afflicted, yet the best of kings;

Line 3. *I sing the God.*] I must expect an attack from the critics, on account of my propositions; who may complain, that they speak too advantageously of my subject, representing it as an immense work, too heavy for an angel; and that nothing more can be found in the whole book, when I talk of—singing the God, &c. even in the second couplet. To them I may answer, that I had injured my divine Hero had I described him other than God as well as man; but yet even there, I make him, as he was, a suffering God: and indeed the greatest part of the proposition is taken up with his exinanition and humiliation, his troubles and his sufferings, which the masters of epic poetry recommend as the most proper matter for that part of a poem. Nay, I have carried him lower than ever any poet yet did his hero, and yet all agreeable to truth,

Him, who from heaven to earth's vile shores came down,
Without his sceptre, diadem, or crown,
To banish Satan to the flames below,
And rescue mortals from impending woe.
Pain mark'd his steps in his incarnate state,
But Godlike patience made him truly great.
To close our wounds he pour'd his precious blood,
And with his life procur'd our peace with God.
In his example we distinctly see,
What Jesus was, and what we ought to be.

in that verse, "*And gave his life when he could give no more.*" For the other objection, giving so great an idea of the whole work, as well as the divine Hero, I hope that too may be easily defended, since it is in order to two advantages; the first in the proposition itself, viz. mentioning the author of the Poem with that mediocrity which both truth and decency require: "*How then shall I,*" &c. The second in the natural connexion of the proposition with the invocation, by introducing the Divinity to my assistance, "*O thou whose word,*" &c.

L. 12. *In his example.*] One great end of our Saviour's coming into the world, was undoubtedly to set us a good example; that his followers might learn from him to be holy, to do good, and to suffer evil, through his grace: but to say that that was the chief or only end, or that man could be saved, or God propitiated by his example; that his example could be a propitiation, an

He taught us precepts disbeliev'd before,
And gave his life when he could give no more.
Hence a new æra in the world began,
And Heaven descended to reside with man.
The golden age appear'd again restor'd,
And saints and angels hail'd their common Lord.
What seers predicted stood reveal'd to sight,
While earth from heaven receiv'd auspicious light.
Reviving hope began afresh to bloom,
And faith's strong optics pierc'd beyond the tomb.
Thus liv'd and died the Saviour, to regain
Apostate man from everlasting pain!
Such was the price our great Redeemer gave,
To ransom wretches whom he came to save!

Will then my Lord propitious aid refuse,
Invok'd my GOD, my Hero, and my muse?

ἀντίλυτρον for the sins of mankind, is just such reason as those who pretend so much to be masters of it frequently put upon the world. I therefore instance in the other ends of our Saviour's coming, teaching a more perfect law, the law of faith, as St. Paul styles it; and principally redeeming mankind, and appeasing his Father by his inestimable merits and painful death; whereby, as the Established Church expressly asserts in the consecration prayer at the communion, "he made a full, perfect and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction, for the sins of the whole world."

I sing his life, and humbly hope for aid
From him by whom created worlds were made;
And hence attempt a work immense and rare,—
A work too vast for angel minds to bear.
The mightiest masters of the tuneful throng,
Whose souls were smitten with the charms of song,
Whose names will live till suns shall cease to shine,
Great Milton, Cowley, Herbert all divine,
These felt the weighty task; but feeling fear'd,
Just sketch'd its outlines, shrunk, and disappear'd.
How then shall I, a nameless thing, presume
To fill with honor their illustrious room?
To shine conspicuous where their laurels fade,
Or make more progress than these bards have made?

O thou, whose word this All of nothing made,
And good pronounc'd the beauteous scene display'd,
O may thy all-enlivening Spirit shine
Through every part of this new world of mine!

L. 38. *Great Milton, Cowley, Herbert all divine.*] Milton in his Paradise Lost: Cowley in his beautiful description of the angel's annunciation, and incarnation of our Saviour, in David's Dream or Vision: and Herbert in his excellent Sacrifice. I might have added more; but all that I have seen are no better than fragments; a complete work of this nature having never yet, as far as I know, been attempted in our language.

Both light and being by thy fiat give,
And this through thee with time shall die or live.
Thus shall the secret cause appear reveal'd,
Why this succeeded where these poets fail'd.

Two worlds already had confess'd our Lord,
By angels honor'd, and by fiends abhorr'd;
Both Hell and Earth their attestations brought,
And rage and gladness prov'd the cures he wrought.
His great designs this varied witness gave,
Those to subdue, but these he came to save.
His ransom'd subjects loud hosannahs sing,
While fiends retire and curse their ancient King.
Already he in deserts waste and wild,
In Godlike innocence severely mild,
Had met the tyrant of the realms below,
And hand to hand subdu'd the mighty foe,
Who, cursing, fled, as when transfix'd he fell
With double vengeance to the flames of hell.
Thus God at last in his own cause appears,
To ransom man, and wipe his servants' tears.

Yet those who people the bright realms of day,
Must also homage to their Master pay,
To vouch for glories not allow'd to shine,
And prove to man his embassy divine.

On Tabor's mount t' evince his mission true,
Both heaven and earth sustain'd this interview.
This mount of God, as Sinai long before,
Celestial glories now descending, bore.
With glowing beauties this divine abode
Recall'd the ancient Paradise of God.

L. 75. *This mount of God.*] The mount of the transfiguration is called the holy mount by St. Peter in his epistles. Nor is there any great doubt but that this was Mount Tabor, the Itabyrium of Josephus, since most of the moderns and ancients are of that opinion. The primitive christians undoubtedly believed it, which they might easily do by tradition, from the disciples: and accordingly the Empress Helena built three Oratories, as is supposed, in the very place of the transfiguration.

L. 77. *With glowing beauties this divine abode.*] The greater part of Palestine is, even now, described, by those who have seen it, as so beautiful, that it is impossible for poetry to mend it; particularly this Mount Tabor, which all travellers represent as one of the most delicious places in the world. Among many, see Surius's Pieux Pelerine, p. 316. "Le sommet de ce sacre mont "est fort agreable, &c. The top of this holy mount is ex- "tremely agreeable and pleasant." 'Tis situated in the "great plain of Esdraelon, about three leagues from "Nazareth, in form like a sugar-loaf, with a curious "pleasant plain on the top; from whence to the foot of it, "it is all covered with flowers, trees, and shrubs (qui sont "toujours verdoyants), which are always green or flourish- "ing, as balsam-trees, olives, laurels," &c. And lower, "This mount seems to have one of the most beautiful "prospects in the world: to the east you may see the

Its steep ascent we climb with pleasing pain;
But as we rise we view the op'ning plain;
Till from its lofty summit we descry
Unnumber'd beauties stretching to the eye;
And underneath, around the spacious coast,
The noblest prospect Jewry's land can boast.
If east by north these prospects you pursue,
Royal Tiberias rises to your view,
Whose wealthy lords their evening pleasures take
In numerous boats upon the neighbouring lake:

" sea of Galilee, part of Stony Arabia, and the mount " of the Beatitudes. To the west, Mount Carmel, and " the Great Sea (the Mediterranean). North, Bethulia, " and Mount Libanus. South, the plain of Esdraelon, " mountains of Gilboa, Hermon, Endor, Naim," &c.

L. 86. *Royal Tiberias.*] Then a new town, built by Herod on the west side of the lake, which bears its name (see the next note) in honour of the emperor Tiberius; whence it was called, as Cæsarea Philippi in Auranitis, by his brother Philip.

L. 88. *In numerous boats upon the neighbouring lake,*] The lake of Gennezareth, so celebrated in the New Testament for many of our Saviour's short voyages; for which reason we shall here once for all give a full account of it. It has several names, both proper and common. It is called a lake for the most part in St. Luke, because a conflux of fresh waters; Jordan falling into it about the north-east corner, by Chorazin and Capernaum, passes through it. It is called a sea by the other Evangelists, not only for its largeness; but according to the idiom of the Hebrew

While ships of burden float with decent pride
In deeper waters on the swelling tide;
These wave their streamers and expand their sails,
And with spread canvas intercept the gales.
Beyond these bounds appears, due east, well known,
Arabia's bosom, chiefly fam'd for stone.

language, which gives the name of sea to all gatherings together of waters, as the sea of Jazer east of Jordan, and even the Brazen sea belonging to the Temple. It has four proper names in the scriptures: one in the Old Testament, the sea of Cinneroth, either from a town so called on its borders, or from its form, something like a harp, in the Hebrew Cinner: In the New Testament it is styled the lake or sea of Gennezareth, Galilee, and Tiberias; Gennezareth, either from Gan Hortus, and Nazar, a flower; or compounded of two languages, a thing common enough; from γη Terra, and Nazareth, a famous neighbouring town, or perhaps some small district thereabout: lastly, the sea of Galilee, from the country so called washing most of its eastern side, and especially the town of Tiberias, standing between Jotopata and Tarichæa, the latter of which Josephus says had much shipping. At the north-west corner of the sea or lake stands Bethsaida; on the east side Gadara, which made such a desperate defence against the Romans; and near that Gerasa or Girgase, which names that whole side of the country, being all the remains of the old nation of the Girgashites, destroyed by Joshua. Josephus makes this lake a hundred furlongs in length, and six in breadth, describing at large thereon the famous sea-fight of the people of that country with the Romans. Our Biddulph says, it is twenty-four miles long, and fifteen broad.

South Kishon rolls, whose banks new waters fill,
When pass'd by Western Hermon's gentle hill,
It rolls august, but yields a weaker tide,
Than when the stars engag'd on Israel's side;
When o'er its crimson'd waves, a ghastly throng,
Bodies, and shields, and helms, promiscuous roll'd along.
Its winding course thence west and northward goes,
And near the walls of little Naim flows.
Hence Carmel's yielding groves entice its waves,
To add new beauties to the soil it laves.

L. 96. *When pass'd by Western Hermon's gentle hill.*] Kishon, here described, is reckoned by geographers the noblest river in Palestine next to the Jordan. It has two heads and two falls, unless my authors are mistaken: its largest head rises south of Tabor, near Sebaste or Samaria; and passing this Western Hermon, a small mountain so called on the west of Jordan, not far from Gilboa, just at the foot of Tabor, it joins the other stream which comes from the north of that mountain, called by some little Kishon. Its two falls are, one into the lake of Tiberias, south of Tarichæa; the other into the Mediterranean, called in the scriptures the Western Sea, and the Great Sea, to distinguish it from their inland seas, and the great Mare Eoüm, behind Arabia.

L. 103. *Hence Carmel's yielding groves entice its waves.*] It is indeed described like a paradise by Fuller and others: for thus he writes in his Pisgah, Lib. 2. p. 161. "As "for Carmel in general, it was so delicious a place, that

Here, when Elijah Baal's minions slew,
Who brought false Gods to supersede the true,
This stream receiv'd the impious culprits' blood,
And on its margin Israel turn'd to God.
From hence it rolls to the great western flood,
A little north, where wealthy Tyrus stood;
Whose stately walls nor storms nor ocean fear,
Whose hardy sons defied the wastes of war.

" more rural pleasure was hardly to be fancied than here " to be found. It consisted of high hills, a fruitful vale, " the pleasant river of Kishon, and a goodly forest. From " which Carmel, as the platform of pleasure, many other " delightful places are so named."

L. 110. *A little north, where wealthy Tyrus stood.*] Palætyrus, or old Tyre, was built on the sea-shore. It was destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar, after a thirteen years siege, though he got nothing by it but the bare nest, the inhabitants flying by sea to their colony at Carthage. After which, new Tyre rose like a phœnix out of its ashes; whence some have thought both name and fable take their original. It was built within the very arms of the sea, the Mediterranean coming quite round it; by the advantage of which situation it sustained a siege of some time, even from Alexander himself, who at last took it with almost infinite pains and labour, being forced to make a causeway into the sea to get at it. But he was well paid for his labour by the incredible riches which he found therein. Now it is altered indeed; nothing of all its proud buildings being left, besides about a hundred miserable huts of Turks and Moors, among vast heaps of ruins.

Her sister Sidon asks a bolder flight,
A tedious distance to the wearied sight—
A greater journey than the eye has made,
And seems half buried in projecting shade.
For close behind it with aspiring height,
The clouds of Libanus obstruct the sight.
If southern views our wand'ring eyes detain,
Jezreel appears, and rich Megiddo's plain;
In that dire spot, unhappy Naboth fell;
In this, Josiah bade the world farewell.
But angry justice overtook the base,
And rooted out vile Ahab's wicked race.

To this fair mount our blessed Lord repair'd,
By those attended who his favors shar'd.
Two destin'd martyrs, and the third his friend,
By him selected, with their Lord ascend.
First James and John, whose superadded name
Was drawn from thunder to express their flame.

L. 127. *Two destin'd martyrs, and the third his friend.*] St. Peter, crucified at Rome with his head downward; and St. James, beheaded by Herod.

L. 130. *Was drawn from thunder to express their flame.*] So interpreted by the Evangelist himself, "Boanerges, that "is, sons of thunder."

Cephas came next, whose more unrivall'd zeal
Our Lord rebuk'd ere it was known to fail.
These, with his more peculiar favor bless'd,
He takes apart, and leaves behind the rest.

Scarce had the cheerful harbinger of day
Warn'd with his voice the shades of night away,
Before our watchful Saviour, (who denies
The sun, his shade, before himself should rise,)
Had conquer'd Tabor's lofty summit, where
His soul ascends in ardent hymns and prayer.
No earthly thought, no sublunary things,
Could clog his spirit or retard its springs,
Or check its progress to the Father's throne,
The mystic mansion of the great Three-One.
To Tabor's mount he beckon'd from the sky
Two glorious saints who reign'd enthron'd on high—
Moses, the leader of God's chosen band,
Who nature's laws inverted with his wand—
With him Elijah, who sublimely rode
A car of lightning to the throne of God;
Whose soul of flame as pure and warm was made
As those which him to his reward convey'd.

Thus law and prophets their perfection find
In Him who suffer'd to redeem mankind.
Thus Christ, and Moses, and Elias came,
Their persons diff'rent, but their views the same.
These, wrapp'd in glory, on mount Tabor walk'd,
And things unutterable look'd and talk'd.
Yet thus compar'd, Elijah's zeal decay'd,
And Moses saw his rivall'd meekness fade.

Here they convers'd on God's mysterious love,
But half reveal'd to those enthron'd above.
They knew their Lord, their monarch of the sky,
Must yield to death, although he could not die;
The Light of Light, hymn'd by the heav'nly quire,
The co-essential Son of his almighty Sire.
This sacred doctrine fully to explain
The host of heaven had labor'd long in vain.
But though they could not his designs explore,
Their duty bade them credit and adore.

L. 153. *Thus law and prophets their perfection find.*] It is an observation of some of the fathers, that by the appearance of Moses and Elias to our Saviour, was figured the harmony between the law, the prophets, and the gospel which he then came to deliver. And indeed there seems to be more of solidity in this than in most of those allegorical fancies.

While thus conversing, these the truth discern'd,
And from the Saviour the dread secret learn'd.
Dull slumbers seiz'd the three Apostles' eyes,
And due attention from each bosom flies.
Fatigu'd and careless they supinely lay,
Nor knew the worth of this important day.
The Saviour saw, and with a piercing beam
Rous'd the dull sloths from their inglorious dream.
They starting gaz'd, but found the scene too bright,
And shrunk disorder'd from the flood of light:
Confus'd, o'erwhelm'd, with these refulgent beams,
It seem'd a vision of romantic dreams.
Thus when the last, the dreadful moment comes,
That groaning nature shall unfold her tombs,
When God's pavilion in the clouds is spread,
And lambent lightnings flame around his head,
Creation trembling at the sight shall fly,
And guilty mortals wish again to die.

The Saviour saw their visual orbs oppress'd,
And half the glory of the scene repress'd.
What yet remain'd his condescension veil'd,
And mitigated what was not conceal'd.
Then, tho' they gaz'd, the wondrous things they saw
Their utmost powers were far too weak to draw.

Unrivall'd beauties deck'd the Saviour's face,
His dazzling form the circling glories grace.
His seamless coat, than falling snows more white,
Enclos'd a pillar of transparent light:
This stands alone, though human arts combine,
And clearly proves the workmanship divine.
The two great prophets who beside him stood,
Array'd in light, their modest glories show'd.
Thus stars appear, when twinkling they display
Their feeble lustre to the orb of day.
Yet Moses, who from trembling Sinai came,
Appear'd encircl'd in a robe of flame;
While great Elijah, half conceal'd from sight,
Shone with strange lustre through a cloud of light:
Should we these scenes to things on earth compare,
We needs must blot what should be render'd fair:
Just as the painter, who designs to show
The sun above, portrays a cloud below.

L. 197. *His seamless coat, than falling snows more white.*] In St. Matth. xvii. 2. we read, "His face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light." There is little doubt but that the same splendour, or glory, with which his face shone, was also communicated to all his blessed body: hence he shone through his clothes, they receiving light from him now, as virtue at other times; whence they must needs appear white, as the clouds do when the sun pierces them with his rays.

The sun advancing trembled as he shone,
Eclips'd with splendors stronger than his own;
Yet seeing Him whom distant worlds obey,
Dispell'd the clouds, and drove the car of day.
Thus cherubs look in their harmonious course
Near light and beauty's unexhausted source:
Their robes grow brilliant, when, commanded, they
Some mighty message to the world convey.

Transports of joy fill'd each disciple's breast,
Too big for utterance, or to be repress'd.
They saw their reason in these truths expire,
Just as the sun extinguishes the fire.
Thus when some prophet has a vision seen,
Or feels an impulse from his God within,
In all his gestures, in his eyes, we find
Decisive tokens of his lab'ring mind;
The springs of nature full of life appear:
Thus the disciples look'd and acted here.
What they perceiv'd, was pleasure mix'd with pain,
And what they fear'd, was losing it again.
Their pond'ring thoughts in mute suspension hung,
And solemn silence sat on every tongue,
Till Cephas, urg'd to ease his anxious breast,
Spoke for himself the language of the rest:

" Much honour'd Master, if thy servants are
" Peculiar objects of thy heav'nly care,
" Grant us permission on this mount to stay;
" Or if we move, O take our souls away.
" If thus permitted to continue here,
" We can with ease three tabernacles rear,
" For Thee, for Moses, for Elias one;
" Speak but the word the labor shall be done;
" Nor has creation's Lord disdain'd to dwell
" In the poor tents of favour'd Israel."

Scarcely had Cephas these desires declar'd,
Before new scenes of miracles appear'd.
Around their heads celestial clouds arise,
Which rather brighten than conceal the skies;
Compar'd with day they seem'd divinely fair,
And scatter'd odours through the balmy air:
Form'd of materials most serenely bright,
They shone a tissue of unsullied light.
Such are those fleeces which unheeded stray,
Where God dispenses everlasting day:
Such was that cloud which made the world's first morn,
Ere the young sun or infant stars were born:

L. 251. *Such was that cloud which made the world's first morn.*] It is generally thought, that this light which was

Such was that pillar which from Egypt mov'd
To pilot myriads by their God belov'd.
From earth to heav'n the lofty column spread,
A moving mountain form'd of flame and shade.

The three Apostles, as the clouds prevail,
Felt all their spirits and their muscles fail;
Their loins relax, their knees no strength impart,
And fear and trembling seize on every heart.
Thus heav'nly virtue, though through shadows seen,
Must with convulsions strike the sons of men!
Low on the earth, dissolv'd in reverent fear,
They heard a voice which none but they must hear;
The voice of God; no more in frowns express'd,
With lightnings written, or in thunders dress'd,
Such as at Sinai issued forth the law,
And with dread earthquakes rock'd the plains below,
But all melodious, tranquil, and serene,
Which charm'd like music this delightful scene.
In words like these the will of God was given,
In attestation of the King of heaven:

created the first day, and distinguished day and night by its circumvolution, till the fourth day, when the sun was made, was no other than a body of light of whose creation we read in Gen. i. 3. and which was afterwards distributed into sun, stars, and perhaps other lucid bodies.

"I thus declare thee my Beloved Son,
"Whom all my servants shall both hear and own."

They heard, but durst not the great Speaker meet,
But humbly prostrate kiss their Master's feet;
Who, with those accents which the dead can raise,
Sooth'd his weak friends, who wake to bursts of praise;
Then silent gaz'd, but could no more discern
The heavenly pair, whose absence now they mourn.

Thus holy souls from sin's gross dregs refin'd,
Whose frames assimilate to perfect mind,
Whose mystic converse with the saints in light
Remains unbroken, and imparts delight—
When these perceive, through sleep's dim curtains, shine
Angelic essences and forms divine,
They wake, and sigh to find them disappear,
Or rapt in vision clasp the empty air:
So these had mourn'd, but that their gracious Lord
Dispell'd their sorrows with his peaceful word.
He, rais'd above that flame which men desire,
Of glory kindled at ambition's fire,
What they had seen commands them to conceal,
For reasons then not prudent to reveal,

Till he the Saviour of the world should die,
Forsake the tomb, and re-ascend the sky:
Then should these links in proper order shine,
And prove the chain of evidence divine.

They all amaz'd revolv'd his deep intent,
Nor fathom'd what these strange expressions meant,
That Christ must die, they heard with strange surprise—
And burst the barriers of the tomb and rise:
Hence tardy faith these painful truths receiv'd,
And half suspected what it half believ'd.
On quitting Tabor he the same express'd,
And tides of grief infus'd in every breast;
Describ'd his wounds, his pains, those scenes of woe,
Which he, though sinless, soon must undergo:
How he, to enter death's uneasy gate,
Must bear the guilty world's unequal weight,
Yet burst asunder death's inglorious chain,
And the third morning rise to life again.

Peculiar anguish enter'd every heart
At truths so dreadful which his lips impart.
All would as gladly, if they durst, reprove,
As Cephas did through his officious love;

"This shall not be," presumptuously he cried,
And in effect the truth of God denied.
Oh! born to err, our kindness soars too high,
Or Christ must suffer, or the world must die.
He knew what heavy ransom must be paid,
Ere time was born, or earth's foundation laid:
He knew the time, and pointed to that hour
When He for man his sacred blood must pour.
The place appear'd, Jerusalem was nigh,
Whose lofty turrets glitter'd in the sky:
A city charg'd with seas of blood before,
Yet this of Christ must now involve it more;
And treasure vengeance for that awful day,
When Roman eagles, watching for their prey,
Should seize her sons to stern destruction giv'n,
And on their heads discharge the wrath of heaven.

Christ from this place to Galilee repairs,
Eas'd by devotion while oppress'd with cares;
And through its wilds a silent journey takes,
Nor aims at greatness by the cures he makes.
Yet vain his efforts to proceed conceal'd,
Suns always shine by their own light reveal'd.
See from afar what crowding myriads come,
And in their train, the blind, the halt, the dumb;

Impell'd by hope, abandon'd cripples meet,
And find compassion at the Saviour's feet.
From old Bethabara the sick they bring,
And swarms attend from Jordan's double spring.
Lepers, demoniacs, feel the genial shower,
And trembling demons shrink beneath his power.
The lame their feet without their crutches find,
And those go seeing who approach'd him blind,

But Oh, what angel's eloquence could prove
A just describer of his deeds of love!
His light imparted to relieve the blind,
Shone on their spirits to illume their mind.
Returning vigour to the lame was given,
That these restor'd might urge their way to heaven.
And while the leper felt his softening skin,
Grace overcame the leprosy within.
How oft has Christ, with deeds like these oppress'd,
Retir'd from labor to solicit rest!
Thus while his works evinc'd his heavenly birth,
Fatigue proclaim'd him like the sons of earth.
To gain that rest which gath'ring crowds denied,
He sometimes slept upon the swelling tide;
And found repose upon the hoary main,
Which earth refus'd, or made him seek in vain.

'Twas in a boat of fair Bethsaida's town,
Which James, and John, their Sire, and Peter, own,
That Christ retir'd to taste the balm of sleep,
Or wake alternately to pray and weep,
When he exerted his Almighty sway,
Which both the ocean and the storms obey.
'Twas at a time when length'ning shadows stray
To warn mankind of the decline of day,
That he forsook the Galilean shore,
The men and coasts of Gadara t'explore;
And when on board, the humble cabin takes,
And sleeps, though all his guard of angels wakes.
The anchor weigh'd, the seamen spread their sails,
And glide in peace before the friendly gales,
While breeze, and waves, one common promise brought
To land them safely on the coast they sought.
But soon prognostics, terrible to sight,
Deform'd the prospects of the flatt'ring night.
The seamen saw a gath'ring vapour rise,
Which snatch'd the land from their half wearied eyes,
Still dark'ning more and more the disappearing skies.

Old Zebedee, by long experience taught,
To times and seasons turn'd his labouring thought:
When first intent he view'd the black'ning air,
He bade his mates for coming storms prepare;
Then seiz'd the helm, as one who knew it best,
And to their quarters order'd all the rest.
Nor was their care more needful than their haste;
A gloomy darkness all the skies o'ercast;
In sullen gusts the winds began to roar,
And drive large billows to the distant shore.
Whether the foe might here attempt to gain
What on the land he struggled for in vain;
Or hop'd by sudden onset to prevail,
Where with fair force he durst no more assail;
Or whether nature only lent the storm,
That men might see what Jesus could perform;
By him permitted, who can storms controul
Which ravage nature, and unhinge the soul;
Remains uncertain to the human race,
And stands a secret which we cannot trace.
But whether this from nature claim'd its birth,
Or him who rules the disobedient earth,
Still more and more its threat'ning rage prevails,
And from the mast divides the splitting sails.

The dead sea roars, and sulph'rous vapours come
In rolling flames from its infernal womb:
Regions remote strange desolations bear,
And bolting thunders bellow through the air.
Old Jordan hears, its waters backward run
(As thrice before) the fatal shock to shun:
Against the stream rolls in th' unnatural tide,
And should'ring seas upon each other ride:
Wind against wind, floods dashing floods, arise,
Whirlwinds and whirlpools blend both earth and skies.
Descending sleets from every quarter come,
And fear and ice the seamen's hands benumb.
Full o'er their heads upon a dismal cloud
Fate's angry messengers for passage crowd.
From its broad front wide sheets of flame are driven,
While wrathful lightnings show the vaults of heav'n.
These with new horrors strike their eyes with light;
But rather burn than interrupt the night.
By these they saw the boiling deep display
Those hidden caves where wild sea-monsters play;

L. 421. *As thrice before.*] Once to Joshua, Josh. iii. 16. once to Elijah, 2 Kings, ii. 8. then to Elisha, ibid. 14.

The gulf which yawn'd produc'd a horrid shore
Of rocks and shelves unseen by man before.
Above, they heard black worlds of water rave,
While death in triumph rode each threat'ning wave.
Thither on surges, fearfully, they rise,
And hang in pyramids amidst the skies;
Thence deep descending, in the awful vale,
Shun for some moments the destructive gale.
Thus in wild tumult rais'd, depress'd, and toss'd,
They mourn their fate, and give themselves for lost.
The helm no more the nervous hand obeys,
But wildly suffers from conflicting seas.
The oozing seams portend some dreadful blow,
Which soon must sink them in the shades below:
Some treach'rous plank they soon expect will start,
Kill their last hopes, and bid their souls depart.
Half fill'd with streams, which now increasing flow,
A thought occurr'd that Jesus slept below:
And in that moment when on him they think,
A cry was utter'd—"Save us, Lord; we sink."
All pray'd, but Judas most, who, dreading fate,
Invok'd that aid which now appear'd too late.
The Saviour, hearing their expiring cries,
Came to their aid with pity in his eyes,

Chid the mad waves, rebuk'd the blust'ring wind,
And chain'd their anger with his mighty mind.
Obedient nature heard his voice, and stood,
And gentle breezes kiss'd the swelling flood;
The mountains sunk, the vales became a plain,
And zephyrs whisper'd on the tranquil main:
The night once more became a peaceful shade,
Still'd by that Word by which the world was made.
Thus ere his Fiat gave creation birth,
Or planted order on the spacious earth,
Tumult through chaos caus'd black waves to roar,
Whose turbid waters knew no rest nor shore.
But when the Godhead its wild bosom press'd,
The unform'd elements inclin'd to rest;
Their mingled masses thenceforth pregnant prove,
And Light was born to Chaos and to Love.
Thus at his voice the boist'rous storms subside,
And stars are seen reflected from the tide;
The crazy vessel reach'd the destin'd shore,
And those who trembled, now their Lord adore;
While guilty demons shun his piercing sight,
And flee for succour to their native night.

Yet more illustrious miracles attend
The Saviour, hast'ning to his journey's end.

Strong, and refresh'd, to Olives' mount they go,
And thence survey the city stretch'd below.
Descending hence, among the trees they spy
Thy happy walls, delightful Bethany!
A village this where Lazarus was lord,
Who often at his hospitable board
Regal'd the Saviour and his faithful friends,
Without adverting to his private ends.
Nor could these friends, so near, neglect that door
Where mutual kindness fill'd each breast before.
With him two sisters now repos'd in love,
And turn'd their faith and hope to things above.
Martha had long her brother's fortune shar'd,
And made his int'rest her sincere regard,
Had liv'd sequester'd with unspotted fame,
And cherish'd virtues which adorn'd her name.
But hapless Mary had at courts been bred,
And trodden paths where pleasure's snares are laid,

L. 490. *Regal'd the Saviour and his faithful friends.*] They might be all faithful yet, though Judas was afterwards corrupted: or if not, the old *Denominatio à majori* will be a sufficient plea.

L. 500. *But hapless Mary had at courts been bred.*] I know it is controverted, whether this Mary were the repenting Magdalene; but it is enough for me, that some great divines have been of that opinion.

There found her chastity a weak defence
Against those arts which murder innocence.
Her soul, subdued by vanity and pride,
Soon lost that virtue which had been her guide;
Hence lust, ambition, each unholy guest,
And seven black demons seiz'd her guilty breast.
These hell-born fiends the Saviour chas'd away,
As mists are scatter'd by the rising day;
Recall'd her soul, by mercy's powerful charms,
From a deceiver's to a Saviour's arms.
Hence an illustrious penitent she prov'd;
Her crimes were great, and much she wept and lov'd.
Thence from the court to Bethany she came,
To mourn and pray, and spread her Saviour's fame:
Through grace divine she found her soul reliev'd,
And by her brother was with joy receiv'd.

Martha and Mary join'd in one request,
And Christ, and his, to see their brother, press'd,
Who now beneath a mortal fever's rage,
Which no attempts could baffle or assuage,
Just gasp'd for life: for, standing by his bed,
The stern physician shook his awful head;
Thence with slow steps in silence to the door
Walks, and declares his skill can do no more.

The pious sisters, overcome with grief,
Look round on all, soliciting relief:
But look in vain for what no art can give,
To dry their tears, and make their brother live.
In this distress they call'd that Friend to mind
Whose powerful voice gave eye-sight to the blind;
And sent a message, though it seem'd too late,
To snatch their brother from impending fate,
To hasten Christ whose power alone could save
Him whom he lov'd from sickness or the grave.

Christ in reply forbade them to despair,
And order'd both to dissipate their fear,—
Told them, that he whom raging sickness prov'd,
Should spread the glory of the God they lov'd.
He, notwithstanding, his approach delay'd,
And, though requested, at a distance stay'd,
Till from his friend the parting soul had fled,
And his remains were lodg'd among the dead.
The funeral rites with due observance made,
And all just honors to his ashes paid,
His weeping friends to his sad house return,
Condole the sisters, and their losses mourn.
But while they pour'd their lamentations here,
The tidings reach'd them, that our Lord was near.

Martha on this, her Godlike guest to meet,
Left her companions, and embrac'd his feet;
And while recounting their disaster—cried,
"Hadst thou been here, my brother had not died;
"And even now, such is my faith's degree,
"Ask what thou wilt, and God will give it thee."
The Saviour, struck with sympathetic pain,
Replied—"Thy brother shall revive again."

Attentive Martha listen'd to her Lord,
Then ran to Mary with his gracious word:
But still her faith directed her to view
That final hour when all must find it true.
The mourning fair some pious Jews attend,
And praise the deeds of their departed friend;
Recount his virtues, his good actions tell,
And inly sigh to live and die as well.
When these perceiv'd that Mary went in haste,
They also rose, not knowing what had pass'd,
And fully bent to soothe the weeping pair,
Walk'd to the grave to pour their sorrows there.
Mary, whom Martha to the Saviour bore,
Fell at his feet as Martha fell before,
And prostrate there in plaintive accents cried,
"Hadst thou been here, my brother had not died."

The mournful group the general grief express'd,
And Jesus groaning wept among the rest:
The woes of man his tender passions mov'd,
He wept like man the loss of what he lov'd.
Again he wept, and ask'd where Lazarus lay,
Devoid of life, a sordid lump of clay?
Too well they knew the margin of the cave,
And show'd the marble that conceal'd his grave.
With sighs suppress'd, he heav'd an inward groan,
And bade the people roll away the stone.
Martha, not yet perceiving his intent,
Anxious to please, yet willing to prevent,
Spoke, paus'd, lamented, hesitated, sigh'd,
" 'Tis now so long, dear Master, since he died,
" That putrid steams must needs infect the air,
" Which neither Thou nor these his friends can bear."

L. 575. *And Jesus groaning wept among the rest.*] He groaned, John, xi. 33. wept, 35. And here I need not tell any judicious reader, that I feel myself fall infinitely short of the history, which I think has the most tenderness in it of any in the whole bible, excepting perhaps that of our Saviour's commending his mother to his friend from the cross, in the ninth book. Nor can scarcely any thing be a greater argument of our Saviour's kindness and goodness to mankind, than his being thus concerned at his friends' misfortunes, even when he knew that he should so soon remove them.

Jesus reply'd, " Believe, and wonders see,
" And humbly these events consign to me."

The stone remov'd, to Heav'n he lifts his eyes,
And prays awhile to Him who form'd the skies;
Then turning boldly to the lifeless clay,
Before spectators in the face of day,
Lifted that voice which ancient silence broke,
That heaven and earth might witness what he spoke;
Then, with that power which gave creation birth,
Pronounc'd augustly, " LAZARUS, COME FORTH."

The piercing accents enter'd death's dark bed,
And from its slumbers woke the trembling dead:
Bound hands and feet, reviving Lazarus mov'd,
And ask'd assistance from the friends he lov'd:
These, while their looks astonishment betray,
Unloos'd his fetters, and he walk'd away.
The gath'ring crowds with stupid wonder gaz'd,
Look'd on each other, then on Christ, amaz'd.
A bursting joy from all exclaim'd, " He lives;
" Dread Son of God," they shout again, " he lives."
Upon his neck the ravish'd sisters fell,
And claim'd almost another miracle

Them from their furious transports to revive,
Half dead with joy that Lazarus was alive.

Christ from the crowd immediately withdraws,
At once t'escape his foes, and shun applause :
For in proportion to the good he wrought,
The Jewish elders his destruction sought.
Hence to the wilderness a tour he made,
And found a shelter in the desert shade ;
In pious deeds his happy moments spent,
And scatter'd miracles where'er he went ;
He liv'd secluded till that day was nigh
When to redeem us he was doom'd to die ;
But then return'd to suffer, and fulfil
The high commands of his great Father's will.

But ere the Saviour from these coasts retir'd,
Simon a friendly interview desir'd.
Simon had long through leprosy been blind,
A shocking spectacle to all mankind—
Had liv'd secluded in a lonely cell,
Where shut from man infectious lepers dwell.
His foul disease had been so much abhorr'd,
That all forsook him but our gracious Lord ;

L. §28. *Simon had long through leprosy been blind.*] He is called Simon the leper, Mark, xiv. 3.

Who, through compassions most divinely great,
Had quite restor'd him to a healthy state.
Simon had now in splendid ease retir'd,
With every blessing that his soul desir'd;
And near to Bethany, his father's seat,
Had cherish'd virtue on his own estate.
But while his riches in abundance flow'd,
His heart with grateful recollection glow'd;
Nor once forgot amidst increasing wealth
The great Physician who restor'd his health.
To Christ one eve he sent, and strongly press'd
Him, with his twelve, to be that night his guest;—
Told him a little banquet he'd prepare,
And Laz'rus and his sisters would be there.
To this request the Saviour, in reply,
Gave his consent, his wish to gratify;
For in his life we no mean stiffness see,
His heart was open, and his converse free;
Life's lawful pleasures he vouchsaf'd to taste,
And all the virtues of both worlds embrac'd.

The guests, arriv'd, a summer parlour found,
Where Tyrian carpets overspread the ground.
Hangings as rich adorn'd the stately room,
The dear-bought work of Sidon's noble loom.

On these some figures drew the strangers' eyes,
Which in their breasts excited much surprize.
For full before them, as intent they gaz'd,
The fate of Sodom they distinctly trac'd;
And in the features which these colours bore,
It frown'd almost as dreadful as before.
The workman's efforts so successful prove,
That all the figures seem'd to weep and move.
Here in a plain the flaming cities glow,
And there spectators into statues grow.
See there where Lot's apostate partner stands,
And backward throws her longing eyes and hand
These eyes and hands, from whence warm life h
fled,
The skilful artist marks as pale and dead.
Those cheeks which first a ruddy freshness sho
Fade while you look, and into paleness grow.
Part of her hair death seems in chains to bind,
And part appears to waver with the wind.
One foot seem'd rais'd, resolv'd its load to bear,
And one seem'd fix'd by cogent fetters there.
Just half transform'd, you view a doubtful strife
'Twixt death's encroachments and expiring life
Till by degrees she seems of breath bereft;
And while you gaze, no more of life is left.

Yet in her face, fear, anger, pity, strive,
As skilful artists make their marbles live.

Not far before, the good old man appears,
By Angels hasten'd and his ruling fears—
The small remains of Sodom with him bears,
And moistens with his tears his silver hairs.
See them scarce lodg'd in little Zoar's walls,
Before from clouds the ruddy vengeance falls.
Big drops of flaming gold, profusely spent,
The falling fire and brimstone represent.
See all aghast the criminals look pale,
While flaming tides descend through Siddim's vale:
With fearful shrieks they seem to pierce the sky,
And half persuade you that you hear them cry,
Or ask for mercy they despis'd of late,
And mourn for their inevitable fate.

Above, some Hebrew characters bestow
This just reflection on the piece below:
" Learn, mortals, hence, by this example given,
" To dread the wrath of sin-avenging Heaven.
" Here fiery lust was purg'd with hotter fire,—
" In flames like these Gomorrah's sons expire."

While here they read old Sodom's fearful doc
Martha and Mary to the banquet come.
Their twice-born brother every eye awakes,
And all attention from the painting takes.
The modest youth a low obedience made,
And to his Lord a grateful homage paid;
Felt at his sight devotion warm his breast,
And all his soul in looks and words express'd.
Here on their seats each cheerful guest was plac
Excepting Martha, who directs the feast;
And Magdalene, who fell with sighs profound,
And tears effus'd, in homage on the ground.
She with low rev'rence clasp'd the Saviour's feet
Nor left that station but with much regret;
With deep contrition smote her heaving breast,
As though unworthy of the ground she press'
With her some costly essences she brings,
Which would have rais'd her in the eyes of king
When all her charms were dress'd and spread
please
Abandon'd man, who seeks licentious ease.
Full on his feet she pour'd the rich perfume,
And all Arabia scatters round the room;

While from her eyes distils a grateful shower,
And flowing tears a richer fragrance pour.
Then with her ringlets, which, in curls display'd,
Had once for man delusive fetters made,
She wipes the sacred feet her hands embrac'd,
And spreads that essence some conceiv'd a waste.
Iscariot said,—" This cost had been employ'd
" To better use, if by the poor enjoy'd."
Not that he felt the welfare of the poor,
His sordid aims were to increase his store;
For while pretending to afford relief,
His views were selfish—Judas was a thief.

Our Lord, who knew the workings of his mind,
Took up his speech just as it seem'd design'd;
And, to enlarge their too contracted sight,
Spoke of his exit to impart new light.
" This precious ointment, which, with too much haste,
" Has been (he said) by some reputed waste,
" Against my coming funeral is design'd,
" A mournful truth which all will quickly find.
" Then as my Gospel spreads, it shall be show'd,
" How Mary paid the gratitude she ow'd."

The sad Apostles hear these painful words,
And every breast the prophecy records;
Yet none the anguish of his soul express'd,
Or ask'd the Saviour to unfold the rest.

That night at pleasant Bethany they stay,
But take their leave on the succeeding day;
Thence to fair BethphageChrist his footsteps bends,
Where gath'ring crowds proclaim themselves his friends.
See there the height to which his soul aspir'd!
See there the pomp which Salem's king desir'd!
On him no horse, no liveried servants wait,
To grace his triumph in a car of state.
A servile Ass sustains th' incarnate Lord,
By Angels worshipp'd, and by saints ador'd.
Hence Rome's proud Pontiff may this truth discern,
That he from Christ ambition did not learn.

See where the multitudes their homage pay,
And, as predicted, decorate his way.
Branches and clothes through all his paths are thrown,
And the palm's garments mingle with their own.

L. 767. *And the palm's garments mingle with their own.*] A custom among the Jews, to spread their garments under great

Thus while they move, from all their voices rise
Those loud hosannas which ascend the skies.
"Hail, Son of David," all their tongues declare,
And then hosannas rend again the air.
But soon these lips will urge a different cry,
And those who shout will clamour—"Crucify."
Christ plainly knew, because he all things knows,
His fickle friends and his inveterate foes;
And through the whole perceiv'd without dismay
The precious ransom which his life must pay.

From the hoarse tumults of the town and day
Jesus retir'd as night resum'd her sway;
And while he thus the destin'd city leaves,
The town of Bethany its Lord receives.
Here was his couch by innocence prepar'd,
And watchful Angels were that night his guard.

A hill there is which fronts with decent pride
Illustrious Solyma's bright eastern side,
With groves of olive crown'd, and thence does claim
From time unknown its immemorial name;

great persons, as a high token of honour; and as it seems, a ceremony of inauguration, and due only to regal dignity; for thus did the captains to Jehu, when they agreed with God's way of disposal, and acknowledged him king. 2 Kings, ix. 13.

Whose three degrees each other higher bear,
Resembling regions in the ambient air.
From its proud top, if there spectators go,
They see the city and the clouds below.
A lovely vale creeps gently winding down,
And fills the space between the hill and town.
On its green breast deceitful Kidron flows,
A torrent now, and now a rill it shows.
And when the earth, scorch'd by the solar beams,
Most wants its moisture, most it hides its streams:
True map of worldly joys! so short their stay,
So imperceptibly they glide away!
By Chemosh and by Moloch first it runs,
And the wise king's disgraceful follies shuns:

L. 788. *Whose three degrees each other higher bear.*] Mount Olivet consists of three degrees or risings.

L. 794. *On its green breast deceitful Kidron flows.*] Those who write of Palestine tell us, that the brook Kidron, or Cedron, is little else than a mass of waters made out of rains which descend from mount Olivet and mount Moria; between which it runs, separating them from each other, and falling thence into the vale of Jehosophat.

L. 800. *By Chemosh and by Moloch first it runs.*] See the melancholy history of Solomon's apostasy and idolatry in 1 Kings, xi. 4, 5, 7. This hill fronts the Temple, and is before, or to the east of Jerusalem, touching upon the north; being called to this day the Mount of Offence or scandal. Of Chemosh we have little in scripture, but that he was the abomination of the Moabites, as Milcom or Moloch of the children of Ammon.

Weaken'd by age, and by his wives betray'd,
Them first his Idols, then their gods he made.
Due east it then a little villa leaves,
Which flows with oil, and thence its name receives.
It stands alone, Gethsemane its name,
Well known to Christ, and still well known to fame.
Its sacred garden stretches by its side,
And forms the margin of the mountain's pride;
Whose sweet recesses, pleasantly retir'd,
In native grandeur swell to be admir'd.
No barren walks, or beauties forc'd, appear
To torture nature and invert the year;
But verdant alleys through the vistas ran,
And wild luxuriance scorn'd the aid of man.
Here tranquil breezes sigh along the shade,
Which seems for prayer and meditation made.
Here in rich arbors fruitful olives grow,
And food and health and medicine bestow.
Here the triumphant palm, for victors made,
Decks the green walks with its projecting shade;

L. 805. *Which flows with oil, and thence its name receives.*] This etymology is generally given of it: and the *Pilgrim* says, it is called to this day the garden of olives, from nine great olives trees still growing in it; though he places it on the lowest hill, and east of it; but Fuller on the second to the north-west thereof, whom I follow.

And though oppress'd, this rival of the vine
In lonely deserts yields both fruit and wine.

Here, while mankind repos'd in balmy rest,
Nor dreamt of joys which Christ and his possess'd,
Ere heav'n's fair lamp had made the shades retire,
And o'er the hills diffus'd his golden fire,
He with his twelve had frequently repair'd,
Escorted safely by a heavenly guard.
Celestial love they contemplate and sing,
And mount to God on pure devotion's wing,
Enjoy what earth can neither take nor give,
And bask in glories which they taste, and live.

Love, genuine love, disdains its task to shun,
But glows with fervour, as a cloudless sun,
Lights up the torch of intellectual fires,
And with devotion all her sons inspires.
Oh, how distinct from that false flame we prize,
Which glows a moment, disappears, and dies!
The nobler passion of celestial love
Mounts from beneath, and grasps at scenes above;
Where holy souls in endless raptures burn,
And songs of praise incessantly return:
And as this globe which now appears so bright,
Rescu'd from chaos, shines with borrow'd light,

Reflects those beams, and all their radiance bears
Back to the skies, to mingle with the stars;
So love divine, whose circles further run
Than that exhaustless source of light the sun,
And from the regions of unclouded day
With its fair seeds impregnates human clay,
From earth's vile shores solicits us to rise,
Claim our high birth, and reascend the skies.

Love, humbler here, and loftier there, we see,
Smile in a flower, and decorate a tree,
Convey its charms to Philomela's notes,
And burst in raptures from a thousand throats.
Earth, air, and ocean, fragrant incense raise,
And teach forgetful man his Maker's praise.
The cheerful lark from yon green carpet springs,
Mounts like an eagle, like an angel sings:
Thence she surveys at the first opening dawn
Each smiling field and every gilded lawn,
Thence warbles forth her wild harmonious airs,
And Heaven accepts them as her praise and prayers.
With her each soul, whom heavenly ardors please,
Shakes off dull slumbers and inglorious ease,
Surveys the world which almost seems as bright
As when emerging from primeval night:

And while the smiling earth unfolds her stores,
Prostrate he falls and silently adores.

O thou great Efflux of the Light divine,
Sent to fulfil thy Father's great design!
Thus didst thou all thy happy morns improve,
Thou Height of pow'r, of holiness, and love.
Whether tall Tabor bent his head to meet
And welcome thither thy triumphant feet;
Or thou by hollow Kidron's doubtful spring
Didst with thy twelve celestial anthems sing,
The everlasting Father, looking down,
Despatch'd his heralds all thy works to own.
Attentive angels on thy accents hung,
Smil'd while they listen'd to thy heavenly tongue,
And every anthem in full chorus sung.
Nor are, great King, though all thy pains are o'er,
And thou art gone from earth's polluted shore,
Those scenes disdain'd, where once thy prayers were pour'd
From hills and plains to heaven's Almighty Lord.
Who seeks in earnest may dismiss despair,
And in the means expect to find thee there.
Nor names nor places thy compassion bind,
Grace, like the air, extends to all mankind.

erceive thee here,
y Love was near.
its wealth decline,
rist and heaven be mine.
m to offend
well as call'd, thy friend!
spotless maid
grant thy suppliant aid,
.h light has deck'd the skies,
To th .. palace lifts his longing eyes;
Whether on old Irene's angry seas,
Near Mona's isle, or the blue Hebrides,
Or from the face of men remov'd away
In a mean cot compos'd of reeds and clay,
Where the inhospitable Humber roars
Devouring by degrees the neighbouring shores,
Or by dear mother Isis stretch'd along,
Or father Thames, he tunes the sacred song;
Which, if thy name eternity can give,
To distant ages yet unborn shall live.

L. 903. *Whether on old Irene's angry seas.*] The Irish seas, about Anglesey, Man, &c. where the author began this work, since completed in several parts of England.

Return, my Muse, and sacred friendship sing,
That most divine, yet most forgotten thing;
To heavenly love thou virtue most allied
Of all that float on life's tempestuous tide!
But where, ah! where art thou in life express'd,
By vice unsullied,—but in Jesu's breast?
Now interest warps what mortals friendship call,
And selfish motives give a tinge to all.
The twelve apostles felt thy sacred flame,
And John sustain'd the lov'd disciple's name.
In all the actions of his soul we view
Love undiminish'd, friendship ever new.
How closely knit! how intimately one,
His soul and Christ's the co-eternal Son!
What charms, what beauties in his features shine,
By love reflected from the face divine.
His eyes, his words, his gestures, and his air,
Combin'd to show his mind serene and fair;
Silent and deep as crystal waters flow,
For noise betrays the shoals which lurk below.

Of those whose ardor sometimes grew too bold,
Cephas appear'd the foremost place to hold;
Like hasty Uzzah, when it seem'd to nod,
His forward hand would prop the ark of God;

Weakness and warmth devotion's place supply,
And faith grew languid when his pulse was high.
Ting'd with the old traditions of their land,
The holy books they could not understand.
Amidst their errors Christ was pleas'd to spare
His weak disciples, who but mortals were:
He knew attachment had their zeal betray'd,
And soon forgave those faults which love had made.
Zeal Peter felt in an undue degree,
Yet none perform'd or suffer'd more than he;
And though with keenness Christ sometimes reprov'd,
No one but John was more than he belov'd:
For these and James were the illustrious three,
Chosen to witness Christ's divinity.

Devotion ended, all to view the town,
Forsook mount Olivet, and hasten'd down;
For, always secret Christ disdain'd to dwell,
Or rob the world to grace a lonely cell—
Like him his servants, through their lives, design'd
To spread his truth, and benefit mankind.
Their love, unbounded, no distinctions knew,
Nor, fetter'd, shrunk to a contracted view;
And as the Saviour of the world had shown
Desires repenting Publicans to own,

So would their frequent conversation be
With worse than these—the haughty Pharisee,
Vain, supercilious, damning all beside,
Brimfull of vice, of ignorance, and pride.
Lust sat enthron'd upon his varnish'd face,
While outward rites preserv'd him from disgrace.
But as vile tares mix with the purest grain,
And heaps of rubbish seeds of gold contain,
So in the mass of this dissembling crew
Some few were virtuous, though they were but few.
Some, who their senses had refus'd to close
When first the Sun of Righteousness arose—
Within whose souls some glimmering knowledge glow'd,
That Christ, though hated, was the Son of God:
And from the evidence which all receiv'd,
Some wish'd him such, and scarcely disbeliev'd.

Weak *Nicodemus*, who the Saviour saw,
Held prepossessions with religious awe:
Him sent from God he readily confess'd,
And from his lips desir'd to learn the rest;
Yet as his faith could not endure the light,
He sought instruction from our Lord by night.

Gamaliel, who in sacred science read
Had with renown a blameless life display'd,
Mature in wisdom, would known truths receive,
But weigh'd their import ere he durst believe.
His name the Sanhedrim declar'd of note,
For much depended on his single vote.
To these was *Joseph* join'd, for counsel fam'd,
Whose ancient birth-place once was Rama nam'd,
But time and men, which blot, change, level all,
Old Rama now Arimathea call.
He near the town held a convenient seat,
Still and retir'd, without the pomp of state,
Not poorly mean, but suited to supply
The wants of nature, not of luxury.

L. 983. *Gamaliel, who in sacred science read.*] It is certain, that our Saviour himself, as well as his disciples, conversed with several of the Pharisees, and sometimes ate with one of the chief of them. It is as certain, that Gamaliel was not very averse to his doctrine, from his discourse in the Acts concerning it. From whence it is not improbable that he might be present at those conferences concerning our Saviour.

L. 990. *Whose ancient birth-place once was Rama nam'd.*] *Ramathaim Zophim*, in *Ephraim* where Samuel lived, and whence most agree Joseph was named.

Here borrow'd streams from Siloam's neighbouring well
In pleasing showers advanc'd by art, and fell;
Perennial verdure deck'd the happy ground,
And fertile nature breath'd her sweets around.
Here grew tall cedars, and triumphant palm,
And ancient Gilead's odoriferous balm:—
This gum a native of Judea grows,
And in big tears of oily fragrance flows.
Here, with some friends retir'd, he wore away
In pleasing converse half the sultry day;
Nor could these friends intruding vices fear,
Nor could intemp'rance hope to enter here:
For as the wise Egyptians at their feasts
Serv'd up a skull before their cheerful guests,
So these around as grave mementos see,
And in their garden walk by Calvary.
Here death in triumph frown'd;—and wisely there
Joseph had hewn himself a sepulchre.
And those like Joseph, virtuous, wise, and brave,
Dare to be cheerful while they view their grave.

L. 997. *Here borrow'd streams from Siloam's neighbouring well.*] The well or fountain of Siloam rises at the north-west corner of Jerusalem, I think above five hundred paces from the foot of Calvary.

Good Joseph here some happy hours employ'd,
And in retirement thus his friends enjoy'd.
Their conversation, noble and refin'd,
With sacred truths instructed every mind.
The rules of justice, falsehood, wrong, and right,—
Their various natures and their sterling weight;—
What can be seen of God by reason's sight,
And what by revelation's clearer light;—
What of himself enlighten'd Plato knew,
And what this sage from Hebrew fountains drew;—
How short of their great prophet Plato came—
Who even to Gentile worlds extends his fame,—
Whom happy Orpheus on his tuneful lyre
Sung like those bards who dream the gods inspire;—
What rules of life adorn'd his sacred law,
What distant truths their ancient sages saw:—
These varied topics dwelt upon their tongues,
Which sometimes touch'd upon their country's wrongs;
And that great Prince both promis'd and foretold
By all the holy oracles of old,

L. 1029. *Whom happy Orpheus on his tuneful lyre.*] That Τὸν is Moses, few question.

That great prophetic Shiloh, long design'd
His groaning country's shackles to unbind.

The weeks of Daniel well they knew drew near,
When all believ'd Messiah would appear.
Hence they concluded from deliberate choice
Without a doubtful or dissenting voice,—
" If this the age of his appearance be,
" The son of David certainly is he."
His wond'rous deeds without disguise they saw
Greater and more than what confirm'd the law :
He spoke as mortal never spake before,
And practis'd all his doctrines taught,—and more.
Hence from these evidences all declare
His claims decisive—reason held the chair.

Them thus employ'd the lov'd disciple found
In the calm limits of their happy ground,
Who with his brother and with Peter came,
Welcom'd, invited, through the Saviour's name.
These, near fair Rama's or old Gibeon's wall,
By Gilgal's, Jericho's, or Jordan's fall,
Joseph had seen the trembling fiends obey,
While Christ from thousands wash'd their sins away.

These when arriv'd, good Joseph warmly sought
To teach his friends those truths their Master taught;
Describe his birth, his spotless life, his law,
And all those wonders which they heard and saw.
For now the fourth swift year declining ran,
Since Christ his public ministry began:
The actions therefore which had mark'd his course,
Furnish'd a pregnant and important source.
The lepers cleans'd, the dead to vigour rais'd,
Which hosts had witness'd, which had all surpris'd,
Were facts so plain they held attention mute,
And left no room for cavil or dispute.
What yet remain'd was bursting into birth,—
His tragic exit from the guilty earth,
In which the Saviour all his life resign'd,
And pour'd his precious blood to purchase all mankind.

CONTENTS

OF THE

SECOND BOOK.

ST. Peter begins the relation of our blessed Saviour's life, which he opens with the accomplishment of Daniel's weeks, the sceptre's departing from Judah, and the tyranny of Herod. He then proceeds to the preparations for our Saviour's birth, the angel's salutation, &c. which he thereupon repeats at large, as Joseph, the husband of the blessed Virgin, had formerly done to Zebedee and him. Joseph's character of her before their marriage; whom having obtained of her father Heli, before they came together she was found with child of the HolyGhost. His passion and various sensations thereupon, till admonished by an angel of her purity and innocence, and the manner of her conception: on which he asks pardon for his unjust censures, and desires her to give him an account of that miraculous transaction. The Virgin relates the appearance of the angel, his salutation, and her conception by the overshadowing of the Holy Spirit. Joseph goes on and gives the character of a good wife in the blessed Virgin, and the history of his travelling with her to see their cousin Elizabeth, who, though old and barren, the angel had declared, should shortly have a child. The way to Geba, near which lived Zacharias and Elizabeth. The description of Zachary's pleasant seat, whom they find dumb at their arrival. The salu-

tation of Elizabeth to the blessed virgin. The birth and circumcision of John the Baptist: his father Zacharias recovers his speech, and gives an account of the occasion of his strange silence, and the angel's prophecy concerning his son: his song from the first of St. Luke. Joseph and the virgin return to Nazareth, and make preparations for her son's birth: whence being recalled by the edict of Augustus, they set out for Bethlehem: a description of the pleasant way thither, and of the most remarkable places on the road, Rachel's tomb, David's well, &c. They arrive at Bethlehem late at night, and can find no lodging. The birth of Christ approaches. Joseph's concern for the virgin. He conducts her into a cave without the town. Our Saviour's birth. The angels attend him. The shepherds come to the cave early in the morning to adore him; and on Joseph's wondering how they heard the news, two young shepherds, Strephon and Claius, give him the relation, after they had sung a carol on the subject. The angel's song at the nativity. The presentation of our Saviour at the temple, where old Simeon finds him. Simeon's song. The testimony of Anna the prophetess: the journey of the three Sages conducted by a star to Jerusalem; who enquire for the place of our Saviour's birth, which Herod, pretending devotion, asks of the Sanhedrim. Gamaliel remembers the event, and repeats their resolution drawn from the prophecy of Micah, that it was to be at Bethlehem. Thither Herod directs the Sages, desiring they would let him know as soon as they found him, on pretence that he would follow and worship him. They find the infant, adore and

present gifts to him; but, warned by a vision, return *incognito* to their own country, not calling at Jerusalem. Herod, being disappointed and enraged, orders the murder of the innocents. Joseph is warned by an angel to flee into Egypt with the child and his mother. As they are going by night, they look back from a hill near the town, and, by the light of the torches in the streets, discover the massacre of the infants. They then hasten to Egypt. The way thither, Syrbon lake, tomb of Pompey. They pass by Babylon, and fix at Memphis. Observations on the Pyramids. The death of Herod. Their return, and retirement to Nazareth for fear of Archelaus, Herod's son. Our Saviour's behaviour in his childhood: his going to Jerusalem at the passover with his parents, and disputation in the temple with the doctors and heads of the Sanhedrim, which Nicodemus calls to mind, observing that he presided in the schools at that time, and giving a character of our Saviour. St. John then gives them a character of Christ in his maturer years, and so affectionately describes him, that Nicodemus is desirous to wait on him; and St. John offering to conduct him, the company break up, having appointed to meet again the next morning, in order to hear the rest of our Saviour's actions.

THE

LIFE

OF

CHRIST.

BOOK II.

A Pause ensu'd when Rama's Lord had done,
Till in the midst Barjona thus begun:
" Inspir'd with love for my great Master's cause,
Whose life displays the spirit of his laws,
I speak with ardor on the side of truth,
And freely tell the virtues of his youth.
Indeed, your questions stimulate my zeal,
And urge my tongue his glories to detail:
Nor will you doubt the facts these lips must speak,
Which shall no rules of just decorum break.

" By foes acknowledg'd, and by friends admir'd,
By nations fam'd, by ancient kings desir'd;

LINE 1. *A Pause ensu'd when Rama's Lord had done.*] By Rama's Lord is meant Joseph of Arimathea.

L. 12. *By nations fam'd, by ancient kings desir'd.*] Famed, for we read of the fame of Jesus, Matt. iv. 24. Luke, iv. 14. 37. and Matt. xiv. 1. Herod heard of the fame of

Priz'd by the learn'd, by prejudice confess'd,
Rever'd by senates, and by saints caress'd;
By reason own'd, proclaim'd by every sign,
By human faith and oracles divine,
The Saviour stands; the world attests his cause,
And myriads bow in homage to his laws.

"You all allow those days are come, or near,
In which Messiah's kingdom must appear.
Those mystic weeks which heavenly Daniel saw,
Are dated from the giving of the law,
Which all, who read his prophecies, explain,
Must usher in the great Messiah's reign.
From these predictions, known to sacred fame,
We first obtain this more than human name.

Jesus; and in several other places. All the world, here, is no more than Jew and Gentile, or all the Roman world, which every one knows was at that time called the *πασα οικουμενη*. Nor were his miracles only known to the Syrians, Matt. iv. 24. the Phænicians, Mark, vii. 26. and afterwards the Grecians, John xii. 20. but to the Romans also.

L. 26. *We first obtain this more than human name.*]. See our learned Mede on Daniel's weeks, which he proves must be accomplished about the time of our Saviour's coming, whichever of the assigned epochs we take for their beginning. Indeed, we have the very name of the Messiah from that prophet, Dan. ix. 25, 26. where he is called Messiah the Prince; and it is added, "Messiah shall be cut off, but not for himself."

The time is past our Rabbies all declare,
And he is come, or mortals must despair.

L. 27. *The time is past our Rabbies all declare.*] Malachi having foretold that the Lord should suddenly come to his temple; the Jews having lost their legislative power; the weeks of Daniel being now accomplished; the Baptist also appearing in the spirit and power of Elias; and indeed all the other prophecies concerning the coming of the Messiah being completed, and all centering in this very time; it would be but very reasonable to suppose the Rabbies did at that time publicly declare their expectation of him, though we had no positive proof for such an assertion. But yet further, it is not only plain, from the Evangelists, that he was then generally expected by the whole nation of the Jews, and even by the Samaritans; but that even their great men expressed themselves freely to the same sense; thus old Simeon, whom some suppose a great Rabbi among them; and Caiaphas, who prophesied very clearly even of the Messiah's sufferings. And Josephus confirms the same; plainly acknowledging, that at that time some great Prince was, by an ancient tradition or prophecy, expected in the east, which, according to his usual flattery, he applies to Vespasian: with all which the modern Jews find themselves so pressed, that they have been forced to own, that the time when we know the Messiah did really come, was indeed that appointed for his coming; but it was delayed, they say, for the sins of the people. It is answered, the promise of the Messiah was absolute, and he was to come to save his people from their sins, when the world was in a desperate condition, and, as one of the Rabbies says, "filled with dogs, wolves, and goats, instead of men." Others of them say, that he did then really come, but is not yet declared, or revealed, remaining all this while *incognito*. And a third sort, as I find it quoted by a

Insult the temple his ambition rais'd,
And basely mock the God our fathers prais'd?
No more to legislate is Israel free;
She scarce retains the name of liberty:
Her sons, oppress'd, are servile clients made,
And all their wealth is drain'd for foreign aid.
The shatter'd remnants of the public spoils
This robber left us to reward our toils.
You know our bold, our unsuccessful fight,
But desp'rate stand, beneath the Gaulonite;
What numbers perish'd in the glorious strife,
Through patriot virtue or contempt of life;
What floods of gore forsook our heroes' veins
To dress the soil and dye their native plains.

"While these commotions ravag'd all the land,
David's descendants, born to give command,

"inestimable value, on the very portal of the temple; "which Judas and Matthias, two brave young men, and "zealous for their law, were so much offended at, that "they got their friends together, and cut it all to pieces "with their swords and axes, though it cost many of "their lives."

L. 47. *No more to legislate is Israel free.*] This seems the most natural interpretation of the sceptre's departing from Judah; that is, the legislative power, which till now remained with those two tribes that returned from captivity.

Who should have exercis'd a royal sway,
Had learn'd, like Christ, to suffer and obey.
From these the public voice his parents nam'd;
And, though reduc'd, allow'd his lineage fam'd;
And hence opinion scrupl'd not to own
The legal Heir of Israel's vacant throne:
Since both his parents drew from David's line
A right to reign which some esteem'd divine;
While either house a clear succession brings
Of honour'd prophets or acknowledg'd kings.

"But ah! what alterations time has made,
From David's sceptre to a servile trade!
Joseph, reduc'd, by labour earn'd his bread,
And by his toils his little household fed!
But in this stage permit me to declare
How first I learn'd who Christ's forerunners were.
Yet all the wonders I proceed to show,
Are best attested by those deeds you know;
And but for these some truths you would receive
Hard to relate, but harder to believe.
But those who see what fills the list'ning earth,
Will credit prodigies which mark'd his birth:

Nor will your judgments think my language wrong,
While I relate what dropp'd from Joseph's tongue!
" Oft have I heard the good old man repeat
(When half reclin'd upon an oozy seat
Against the sounding beach in peace we lay
To taste the breeze which clos'd the scorching day)
The wond'rous miracles which mark'd his life,
Urg'd him to take, and to suspect his wife.
Once I remember in the evening air,
When he and I and Zebedee were there,
We press'd him all to tell us what he knew
Of that conception all acknowledg'd true.
He gave consent, and, leaning on his side,
Drew this description of himself and bride :

" Know then, he said, when youth's fresh blossoms past
Had brought of seven Sabbatic years the last,

L. 98. *Had brought of seven Sabbatic years the last.*] Joseph, it is probable, was a middle-aged person at the time of his marriage. The sabbatic year is either the seventh year, or seven years, a week of years: suppose him then born either in the last year of the first sabbath, or the very seventh or sabbatic year, he might be now something above forty.

Advis'd by friends, I sought a virtuous wife
To share the fortunes and fatigues of life.
From all that Nazareth had counted fair,
And many virgins bloom'd in beauty there,
Old Heli's daughter far outshone the rest,
And all her image on my soul impress'd.
From the same source our kindred blood we drew,
And our descent can be unknown to few.
From David he by Nathan brings his line,
And I by Solomon deducing mine.
As join'd the roots, so now the branches join,
And, though obscure, the impulse seem'd divine.
Gladly he gives what I as gladly take,
And both well pleas'd the solemn contract make.
But rivals sought to snatch her from my breast,
And envy thought me too supremely bless'd.
Her virtuous fame engross'd the public voice,
And all united to applaud my choice.

"Judge then the anguish of my labouring breast,
When in my arms the lovely maid I press'd.—

L. 103. *Old Heli's daughter far outshone the rest.*] Heli is said to have been the father of the blessed virgin. See *Eusebius's Ecclesiastical History.*

Frozen with horror, stupid with amaze,
I gaz'd, suspected, and renew'd my gaze;
Believ'd and doubted, disbeliev'd and fear'd
The grave in which I saw my hopes interr'd.
Thus he who holds a serpent in his arms
Forgets its poison to admire its charms;
Sees it unfold its deleterious spring,
And with its fangs inflict a mortal sting;
Then as the venom rankles in his veins,
He spurns the reptile, while he writhes with pains:
Thus did I feel the intellectual sore
In due proportion as I lov'd before.

"Struck with such proofs as would not let me err,
I felt indignant at her sex and her;
While love and vengeance in my soul debate,
But love detain'd me, though I strove to hate.
Resolv'd at length, if possible, to part,
And extricate my too deluded heart,
To tear by force her perjur'd image thence,
Already blasted by lost innocence,
I left the room in darkness and despair
To shun those tears which flow'd to keep me there:
But feeling rev'rence for her father's fame,
I labor'd to conceal her guilt and shame,

To wait awhile for some convenient hour,
And then in private put her from my door.

" Determin'd thus, I rush'd in haste away,
And on the ground a widow'd bridegroom lay:
There mourn'd my fate (for gentle sleep had fled)
With restless thoughts upon a thorny bed,
And in those shadows which preclude the light
In sighs and groans prolong'd the tedious night.
Twice had the cheerful harbinger of day
Mark'd the dull hours to chase the shades away,
When grief exhausted left my flowing eyes,
And sudden slumbers seiz'd me by surprise.
Thus sunk in sweet forgetfulness of grief,
A cordial powerful to yield relief,
Around my head some beaming glories play,
Which seem'd a prelude to eternal day.
I then beheld a glorious watcher sent,
For nothing less it prov'd by the event.
His purple wings dispell'd the morning shade,
And gave me comfort by the light they made.
Then, while his voice and looks assail'd my heart,
His heavenly accents did these truths impart:

" Illustrious branch of Jesse's noble stem,
" And heir of David's throne and diadem,
" What thoughts disconsolate, or restless fear,
" From thy fair bride detain thee mourning here.
" Her soul is free from those unchaste desires
" Or guilty deeds which fan unholy fires.
" As for the root of all thy jealous cares,
" The sacred burden which the virgin bears,
" The Holy Spirit did the gift infuse,
" And sent an Angel to impart the news
" To her and thee ;—and ere the changing moon
" Five courses more, renew'd with light, has run,
" Her womb shall teem with an illustrious birth,
" That brings salvation to the sinful earth.
" His name is *Jesus*, sacredly design'd
" A mighty Saviour to redeem mankind."

" Thus having said, the Angel disappears ;
But all he utter'd sounded in my ears.
In unknown paths my understanding rov'd
Between the vision and the maid I lov'd.
Rous'd from my couch, in trembling haste I come
With sacred horror to the nuptial room,
And, like a statue frozen at the door,
Beheld the object whom I lov'd before.

(Here Joseph's warmth some tender things express'd,
A lover's feelings must describe the rest.)

" Awaken'd Mary lay dissolv'd in tears,
And stretch'd her hand to dissipate my fears.
Thus the sweet rose new paints its lovely hue,
When bending with big drops of morning dew!
Thus Mary's beauties stood afresh display'd,
And gather'd lustre from the tears she shed!
Nearer I drew, solicitous to know
If joy or grief had made these sluices flow;—
If sorrow soften'd her dear weeping eyes,
Or her rapt soul dissolv'd in extacies.
For, since the vision, these my thoughts employ,
But faith afforded me a source of joy.
On my approach, the blush that deck'd her face,
I soon discern'd, was all from pow'rful grace;
While the soft moisture which her eyes impart,
Came from those raptures which she felt at heart.

" A mutual pause succeeded, ere to break
The awful silence she assay'd to speak.
She then conjur'd me, if I held her dear,
To wait with patience her defence to hear.
Insist no more, I cried, on thy defence,
For Heaven vouchsafes to clear thy innocence.

An Angel-form, not Mary's self more fair,
Did all the secrets of thy soul declare,
And, in a vision of the recent night,
Put my suspicions and my fears to flight.
Then dry those tears, and henceforth cease to grieve,
For he who censur'd asks thee to forgive.

"Then Heaven," she cried, "has shewn what I conceal'd;
"The mighty secret is at last reveal'd,
"Which would require, should I attempt to tell,
"To gain belief another miracle."

"By our chaste loves, I said, much injur'd fair,
And by that offspring thou art bless'd to bear,
Disclose thy soul, nor my suspicions fear,
Since Heav'n instructs me strange events to hear.
For if my judgment does not lead me wrong,
A train of miracles must guide thy tongue."

"Know then, she said, three moons are fully gone,
"Indeed the fourth is swiftly rolling on,
"Since in my father's house I sat engag'd,
"Revolving on the great event presag'd,
"When some great monarch of mysterious birth
"Shall raise a kingdom and reform the earth.

" This promis'd Prince, this Heav'n's almighty Heir,
" Engross'd my thoughts, and strangely claim'd my care;
" Who faith, and truth, and justice should maintain,
" And bless all nature with his peaceful reign;
" When streams of honey from the rocks shall flow,
" And palms and roses in the desert grow.
" Supremely bless'd I thought and counted her,
" Who at her breast the Prince of Life should bear:
" And pleas'd, I fancied humble gifts to bring
" To greet and decorate the infant king:—
" Thought, if I might within my arms enfold,
" Or in his cradle innocently bold
" Seize the young hero, shelter him from harms,
" Kiss his soft cheeks, and gaze upon his charms,
" No monarch's consort should my rival prove
" In grateful songs, felicity, and love.

" While musing thus, a tide of glory came,
" And fill'd the chamber with celestial flame.
" Then from the skies a youth, with sunbeams crown'd,
" Perfum'd the air, and cast his smiles around.
" He seem'd more lovely than the race of man,
" And having bow'd, his message thus began:

" Hail, highly favour'd, bless'd with truth and grace,
" By Heav'n selected from the human race;
" Who, nobly honor'd, must that mother prove
" Whom thou so lately didst admire and love.
" Nor needst thou blush at what my lips declare;
" Thy virgin womb the infant God must bear,—
" That promis'd Prince who shall the world regain,
" And over all his Father's empire reign.
" Nay, do not ask how this can be perform'd,
" For I perceive thy chastity alarm'd:
" A power divine shall prove my message true,
" And power omnipotent can wonders do.
" The Holy Ghost, the quintessence of love,
" Shall breathe conception on thee from above.
" Thy Holy offspring *Jesus* shall be nam'd,
" By saints rever'd, by distant ages fam'd.
" Thus God appears in human flesh confin'd,
" And thus becomes the Saviour of mankind.
" But if thy faith demand some evidence,
" Indulgent Heaven has sent thee proof from sense.
" Thy aged cousin, who in deep despair
" Long sigh'd like Sarah to embrace an heir,
" In silver locks at length is pregnant grown,
" And in three months shall strangely bear a son.

L. 277. *Thy aged cousin.*] Elizabeth.

" Truth guides my tongue; the facts which I have given
" Shall be accomplish'd by the hand of Heaven."

" He said, and paus'd: I hasten'd to reply,
" When lo! his pinions bore him to the sky.
" Amaz'd I view'd, as o'er the clouds he trod,
" This strange but sacred messenger of God,
" And cried, " My faith I can no more suspend
" At what my reason cannot comprehend.
" Be God's decrees fulfill'd without delay,
" Let him command, his handmaid shall obey."

" Scarce had I spoke and Gabriel disappear'd,
" Ere a delightful whispering sound I heard,
" Like what a solitary ear perceives
" When gentle breezes fan the velvet leaves.
" Again celestial fragrancies perfume
" And scatter paradise around the room.
" Thus far I know, but can no more explain;
" Nor can we want what Heav'n does thus detain.
" But this I know, that from some secret cause
" Which seems subversive of all nature's laws,
" Grew this strange burden now so plain to see,
" Which Heav'n, its author, has reveal'd to thee."

" She said: I saw her to my arms denied,
A virgin mother and a virgin bride:
And from that hour, to bless my humble life,
The friend and lover centred in the wife.

" If closely view'd in her domestic state,
Her private virtues make her truly great.
Yet still I bore an undisputed sway;
'Twas not her task, but pleasure, to obey—
But rarely wrong in what she did or said,
And my delight was her chief study made.
Nor did I for her care ungrateful prove,
Or use my power but to display my love.
And as her soul no angry passions toss'd,
My heart restor'd what hapless Eve had lost;
And where dominion yields to mutual flame,
To ask or take exactly means the same.

L. 310. *'Twas not her task, but pleasure, to obey.*] Undoubtedly the blessed virgin was endued with all conjugal as well as solitary graces and virtues, and accordingly from her I here draw the picture of a good wife; more defensibly I am sure than the contrary is often done by the Italian painters, who, from their wives, and sometimes their mistresses, usually draw their Madonas, or pictures of the blessed virgin; nay, I have been credibly informed, that something very like it was done some years since in Ireland, where they borrowed the face of a very lovely person of quality to put upon the virgin; I suppose, that they might have some excuse for their idolatry.

All my commands were favours in her hands,
And her requests to me were all commands.
Her house was sacred, and devoid of views
To prate, and gossip, tell, and gather news:
She rarely wander'd, never but with me,
Except on business, or on charity.

"The great occasions we have just survey'd
Soon from our home call'd forth the holy maid:
For friendship's bonds and nature's ties unite,
And both to old Elizabeth invite;
Whose new entreaties urg'd us to consent,
And I and Mary to her cottage went.

"On journeying hence we soon Bethulia leave,
When Kishon's fords our weary feet receive.
Thence fatal Gilboa's lofty cliffs we cross'd,
Where David's much lamented friend was lost.
Then Ephraim's lot we travers'd, and came down
Near the new walls of Shemir's ancient town.

L. 333. *Thence fatal Gilboa's lofty cliffs we cross'd.*] The reason of this epithet is assigned in the next verse.

L. 336. *Near the new walls of Shemir's ancient town.*] Samaria, first named from Shemir, of whom its ground was bought: long after it was rebuilt by Herod, and called Sebaste.

Here Shechem lay, where Jacob deign'd to dwell,
Near Dothan's plain, and Sychar's famous well;
And Gerizim's proud altar, rais'd in spite,
Accurs'd to every faithful Israelite.
By Bethel next and Jericho we pass'd,
Or left the first, and travell'd through the last:

L. 338. *Near Dothan's plain, and Sychar's famous well.*] I am not ignorant that some travellers, especially the Papists, make Dothan far enough from Shechem and Samaria; nay, they describe it, reliques and all (the pit that Joseph was put in, and it is a wonder that they have not a small part of his coat too), about two hours journey from Magdala, some scores of miles from the true Dothan; which it is plain must be near Samaria; for when Jacob sent Joseph to look for his brethren, he told him they were at, or near, Shechem; but they were gone thence to Dothan, whither he soon followed and found them; which he could not so easily have done, had they driven their cattle quite over Gilboa and Kishon, almost sixty miles from Shechem. Thus can ignorance remove both plains and mountains, where faith is too weak to do it.

L. 339. *And Gerizim's proud altar, rais'd in spite.*] I say altar, not temple, because at this time they had no temple there; what they once had being demolished, in his zeal, by John Hircanus, before the birth of our Saviour; I say, built in spite, because, as Josephus tells us, "Manasse, the "son-in-law of Tobias, being banished from Jerusalem, "Nehem. xiii. 28. fled to the Heathen or mungrel Samari-"tans, and built there an anti-temple on Mount Gerizim."

And the third noon, where gentle Siloam falls,
Perceiv'd before us Salem's sacred walls,
Which leaving on the left, our course we bend
To little Geba, where our travels end.

"Full in our view, contiguous to a wood,
The pleasant house of Zacharias stood.
'Twas neat not proud, design'd for use not fame,
Such as ambition might despise or blame;
Adapted well to entertain a guest,
Such as became a humble country priest.

L. 343. *And the third noon, where gentle Siloam falls.*] It is about three days journey from Nazareth to Jerusalem, as Surius tells us, lib. 2. p. 305. But Zacharias's house not being much further, they might travel a little faster, and get thither that night.

L. 346. *To little Geba, where our travels end.*] Zachary's house, says Fuller, was near to Emmaus; though in his map it is, of the two, nearer Geba; and it might indeed be near both, since there is but little distance between them.

L. 348. *The pleasant house of Zacharias stood.*] To tell the truth, I built Zachary's house from the very ground myself, and thought it all pure fancy; but it luckily happens that it was exactly such a one as I describe it, as I have since found in my Pilgrim, p. 433. *Maison de Saint* Zachary, &c. The house of St. Zachary is very "pleasantly seated on the top of a little hill. It has a fountain of delicate crystal waters, not far from the gate which is towards the east."

" Around his house rich fields of glebe remain'd,
Which avarice stole, and sacrilege detain'd;
For Geba's suburbs to the priests were given
By ancient prophets as the will of Heaven.
But these the reigning tyranny devour,
And time gives sanction to the strides of power.
He felt his loss, and mourn'd to see the crime,
But only pitied those who injur'd him.
The small estate on which he liv'd supplied
His various wants, but luxury denied:
In pious deeds he all the surplus spent,
And Heav'n protected what its favours lent.
Before the gate in gentle murmurs ran,
Gilt by the beamings of the rising sun,
A crystal stream, which from the mountain's side
In loud cascades became the valley's pride.
The west a fair and spacious prospect yields
Of woody foliage and luxuriant fields.
The bleak north wind the mountain's top arrests,
And shields the cottage with its crescent breasts:
While olive groves from southern heats defend,
And shade, and fruit, delight, and profit blend.
And in those places where the hill inclines,
'Tis richly mantled with productive vines.

" Thither arriv'd, we mutually embrac'd,
And both the guests were at the table plac'd;
When such plain viands as their fields afford,
As quickly spread the hospitable board;
And every sign which silence could convey,
Bade us as welcome as the orb of day.
For, strange to tell, our aged host was dumb,
As if intern'd within the silent tomb;
And all the reason we could hear assign'd,
Still left some shadows to obscure the mind:
For in the temple, where he tarried long,
Some unknown causes had confin'd his tongue.

" But first Elizabeth to meet us ran,
And to the virgin thus inspir'd began:
" Bless'd above women shall thy title be,
" And yet more bless'd thy wond'rous Child than thee.
" Why should the mother of my Saviour grace
" With condescension such an humble place?
" For know, no sooner did my ravish'd ear
" The sound of thy melodious accents hear,
" Than by some impulse my prophetic boy
" Leap'd in my womb to testify his joy.

" And bless'd is she whose noble faith, like thine,
" Expels all doubt of truth and power divine;
" Speedy performance shall thy wishes crown,
" And future ages spread thy fair renown."
Thus having said, they mutually embrace,
While tears of gladness steal from either face.
Her voice to Heav'n the pious virgin rais'd,
And God in songs of holy triumph prais'd.
Then in an anthem both their portions bore,
And in low rev'rence mutually adore.

" These more than friendly salutations paid,
With old Elizabeth awhile we stay'd;
Till thrice we saw revolving Cynthia wane,
And thrice repleaish her fair orb again;
When the fair matron felt a mother's throes,
That fruitful source of happiness and woes.
But her sharp pangs were recompens'd with joy,
When in her arms she press'd the lovely boy.
Her anxious kindred sat around her bed,
And all rejoic'd to see her dangers fled;
And when the eighth auspicious morning smil'd,
Hasten'd with joy to circumcise the child;
Then to the infant gave the father's name,
Prop of his age, his fortune, and his fame,

And pray'd devoutly that his soul might be
Heir of his virtues, grace, and piety.

" The mother seem'd attentive to their choice,
But heard his name with this dissenting voice,—
" The will of Heaven forbids you to proceed,
" It must be *John* ; for God has so decreed."
Her wond'ring friends expostulate in vain,
For all their efforts no advantage gain.
The father heard, and with his eyes and hands
A style and tablet from his friends demands,
Then in the ductile wax disclos'd his breast,
And the same name the mother gave, impress'd.
We, all amaz'd at this obscure event,
Paus'd to resolve what this decision meant.
But while we sought for causes unexplor'd,
His long lost speech was suddenly restor'd!
Facts so amazing all our wonder raise,
And turn our questions into bursts of praise.
With grateful joy our tuneful voices sung,
And Zach'ry's house with hallelujahs rung.
At length we ask, on his reply intent,
What his strange speech, but stranger silence, meant?

L. 432. *A style and tablet from his friends demands.*] The ancient way of writing among most nations.

He sigh'd, and smil'd, our anxious questions weigh'd,
And thus complied with the request we made:

" Call'd by my priestly agency to bring
" And offer incense to all nature's King,
" While Israel's hosts without the temple bend,
" I saw great Gabriel in the flame descend.
" Upon the altar his right hand he plac'd,
" The other rais'd me from the ground I press'd.
' Thy God,' he said, ' has heard thy ceaseless prayer,
' And thou, though hoary, shalt embrace an heir.
' His name is JOHN, and songs of holy mirth
' Shall fill thy cottage at his wond'rous birth.
' He, dear and great in God's impartial sight,
' An abstinent devoted Israelite,
' Divine illapses daily shall receive,
' To fill his soul with peace which Heav'n will give.
' And when prepar'd with an enlighten'd mind,
' And render'd holy for the work assign'd,
' His thundering voice shall sound a loud alarm,
' And wake the vile from sin's delusive charm.
' Then crowds of penitents their crimes shall mourn,
' And, finding mercy, to their God return,
' On faith's strong pinions pierce the yielding shade,
' And grasp those glories which shall never fade.

' Thus shall the prophet mark the Saviour's way,
' As morning stars proclaim approaching day.' 470

" He soon perceiv'd the truths I heard him tell,
" Had made his pupil half an infidel;
" Then on his face such frowning aspect wore
" As ne'er disfigur'd his fair form before;
" Then said—' Since Heav'n must speak to man in vain, 475
' Nor credit to its oracles obtain,
' At once experience truth and power divine,
' And be thyself unto thyself a sign.
' Till thy despair'd but promis'd blessing come, 479
' I seal thy lips— At God's command, be dumb.'

" Trembling I knelt, and would have mercy cried,
" But all address my fault'ring tongue denied.
" The Angel nods, well knowing what I meant,
" Then back to Heav'n in clouds of incense went.
" With mental prayer I straight the throne address'd,
" But felt those shackles which his voice impress'd;
" Which now remov'd, my speech returns again,
" And frees my organs from their heavy chain.
" Since Heav'n has thus restor'd my absent voice,
" Let endless goodness be its happy choice! 490

All guilt and danger far remov'd,
All that by him is disapprov'd,
And fear, the child of sin.

IV.

"Nor thee, thou strange prophetic boy,
By Heav'n inspir'd ere thou didst come
From the dark closet of the womb,
Thy aged parents' wonder, and their joy:
Thee, though unsung, unheeded yet
Midst crowds of heroes, will the muse forget!
Thee, who the happy news shalt bring,
The harbinger of Heaven's high king;
The banners of his grace display
To scatter pardons all the way.
"He comes, he comes! I see him swift advance;
He comes to our deliverance:
I see his orient light arise,
Scatt'ring ten thousand suns around the skies:
It flash'd through chaos, whose wild surges fell.
As when the first strange day was made,
The fiends were all of a new world afraid,
As wide it glar'd through all the inmost caves of hell.

L. 556. *I see his orient light arise.*] The word orient is taken in our language (unless I am mistaken) either for illustrious or eastern. I aim therein at an old but a good word which our translators here make use of, who render the word ἀνατολὴ the day-spring, though it signifies also the branch, by which name our Saviour was often foretold; which sense of the word I have also given.

If there it mov'd their dread, but not their love,
What wonders shall it not perform above?
Sin to th' abyss shall sink again;
Death, the great slayer, shall himself be slain,
And truth and heaven-born peace for ever reign."

"Thus sung the holy patriarch, while we
Listen'd with joy, entranc'd with extacy;
Perceiv'd their bliss unmix'd with base alloy,
And in our hearts partook the parents' joy.
These triumphs finish'd, we prepar'd to come
To pleasant Nazareth, our native home;
And on arriving from our length'ned stay,
Recounted scenes which met us by the way,
In this small city fixing our abode
To wait the birth of the incarnate God.

"Since first we left our native home, the sun
Through heaven's blue concave three whole moons had run;
Each moment therefore warn'd us to prepare
Our little cot for Heaven's Almighty Heir.
Yet as the virgin felt his birth draw near,
Her hopes reviv'd to dissipate her fear.
Our little income all our wants supplied,
But left no food for vanity or pride.

Yet these conveniencies obtain'd with care,
Some adverse causes would not let us share.
A Roman edict interdicts our stay,
And us to Beth'lem urg'd without delay,
The ancient seat of David's royal line,
The lovely virgin's origin and mine.
This powerful edict all before me know,
And Rome despises to relax her law.

" 'Twas at a time when angry storms were spent,
And nature smil'd to favour the event,
That for our tedious journey we prepare
Beneath the influence of the balmy air.
The furious tempests seem'd involv'd in sleep,
And gentle breezes only kiss'd the deep.
Departing winter grew serene and mild,
Put on smooth looks, and on creation smil'd:
While in our way officious nature strews
The blue-ey'd violet and blushing rose;—

L. 599. *Departing winter grew serene and mild.*] Divines have differed much concerning the time of the year when our Saviour was born. But it does not much affect me, whether our Saviour's birth were in December, September, March, or whatever month besides; being extremely well satisfied that I have one day appointed, whereon to celebrate the memory of that greatest blessing which God ever gave to man.

While all the flowers which decorate the spring,
Her liberal hands in rich profusion bring.
Walking from Naz'reth's garden of delight,
Hermon and Tabor rise before our sight;
Our passage then across some streams we take,
Which lose themselves in the Tiberian lake;
And through a well known road came gladly down
On the third night to Salem's sacred town.
Our due devotions in the temple paid,
The night and morn we in the city stay'd,
But left our friends in the decline of day,
And with discourse beguil'd the tedious way.
At length when Beth'lem's turrets we espied,
I felt strong pleasures through my bosom glide,

L. 603. *While all the flowers which decorate the spring.*] The end of winter is the beginning of the spring; and for the flowers at that time growing wild in Palestine, see Eugene Rogier, who lived some time in the very convent of Nazareth, as I find him quoted by Walker, in his life of Christ, p. 79. §. 102. "This city of Nazareth," says he, "is "well called a flower; for I might affirm, that having run "through many realms, and viewed many provinces in "Asia, Afric, and Europe, I never saw any comparable to "this of Nazareth, for the great number of fair and odori-"ferous plants and flowers, which grow wild there through-"out *all the seasons of the year*: for from December to "April, all the little hills, fields, and way-sides are enamel-"led with Anemonies, Hyacinths, &c.;" and Surius to the "same sense, and almost in the same words.

Which still increas'd as we our path pursued,
And all our prospects of distress subdued.
But as the light its glimm'ring rays withdraws,
When Rachel's tomb on our right hand arose,
Each place of fame the holy maid I show'd,
Where'er our optics could command the road.
From yonder well, I said, those waters went
Which three stern heroes brought to David's tent.
'Twas there, when young, he kept his flocks,—
and there
Slew the rough lion and the shaggy bear.
When lo! she shriek'd, and clasp'd me to her breast,
And sighing begg'd me to conceal the rest.

"The night had now her sable mantle spread,
And birds in silence sought their mossy bed:
The grazing beasts were stretch'd within their lair,
And drowsy bats enjoy'd the tranquil air,
When we, fatigued, to Beth'lem's suburbs come
To be enroll'd in our paternal home;
But on approaching found ourselves too late
To gain admission ere they shut the gate:
And crowds, like us, in expectation stay
To mourn their lot or wait returning day.

To gain some shed we every effort try,
Till the dull moon discover'd midnight nigh,
But found no friend to mitigate our woe,
Or wipe those tears which now began to flow.
Harass'd with fears, with recent toils oppress'd,
Without refreshment or a place to rest,
We search'd the suburbs, but we search'd in vain,
For disappointment added to our pain.

" But new occasions gave new stings to woe,
And all our fears in new directions flow!
My lovely partner felt that moment near,
Which in our state was terrible to bear:—
So near, it threaten'd to precede the day,
And which like death admitted no delay.
My swelling heart I could no more suppress,
But in these strains discover'd my distress:
" O my distracted breast! forlorn and poor,
" Repell'd from each inhospitable door;
" Strangers, benighted, tir'd, with hunger faint,
" And shut indignant from the home we want:
" Still more than all, and what I least can bear,
" She whom I love must feel the greatest share.

" O false philosophy ! which says—relief
" May be obtain'd by sympathy in grief.
" Instead of this, its strokes more keenly fall,
" When each feels each, and bears the weight of all."

" Meanwhile her bosom seem'd to Heaven resign'd,
And no alarm disturb'd her pious mind.
No sigh repining, no impatient word
Dropp'd from her lips to vilify her Lord ;
But from her tongue these two expressions flow,
" It must be best, for Heaven will have it so.
" We must not murmur, nor unjustly grieve ;
" For he who made us, bids us to believe."
Sham'd by the kind reproof, I soon repress'd
My wayward thoughts, and tranquilliz'd my breast;
Then to a well-known cavity repair'd,
And all its horrors to the dews preferr'd.

L. 675. *Then to a well-known cavity repair'd.*] Walker's account of it is this, p. 26. § 27. " It is," says he, " a place " of common receipt on the east side of Bethlehem, without " the town, made in a hollow rock, as is usual for stables in " that rocky country, where was a manger also cut out of the " stone. Surius says, that about the year 326, the empress " Helena built a stately church over this cave, which re- " mains to this day ; the Cave or Grot itself being under " the quire.—The very place where tradition says the bless-

A cave it was where cattle found repose,
And grief retir'd to dissipate its woes,
In storms a refuge to the shivering swain,
When sudden sleet comes driving o'er the plain;
But whether hewn by labour in the stone,
Or form'd by nature, was to us unknown.
Some vagrant reeds I gather'd at the gate,
Which, mix'd with stubble, form'd her bed of state.
These to the virgin for a couch I gave,
Plac'd in the inmost corner of the cave:
Such pomp did David's Royal Heir assume,
Such was the furniture, and such the room
The rest a choir of modest angels brings,
But veil their faces with their purple wings.

" The moon had now with beams of borrow'd light
In her pale chariot made the noon of night.

" ed Virgin was delivered, being covered with a handsome
" white marble, in the middle of which is inlaid a green
" jasper, of about a span diameter, round which jasper is
" a circle of gold, in form of a sun, with four rays of se-
" veral colours, made of diamonds, rubies, granites, and
" other precious stones: in the circle are graven in capital
" characters these words, HERE WAS BORN JESUS
" CHRIST OF THE VIRGIN MARY."

Nor human voice nor grazing beast we hear,
But rising vapours chill'd the midnight air.
Faint did the lamp on neighbouring Edar burn,
For lazy fogs obscur'd its glimmering urn.
The drowsy stars in sluggish motion roll,
Suspend their courses, and arrest the pole.
Pensive I sat, and clos'd my weary eyes;
But anguish, slumber to my lids denies.
Yet strange to tell! by Heav'n it seem'd impress'd,
Sleep for some moments stole upon my breast.
But soon a light of supernatural birth,
Brighter than this which now illumes the earth,
Through my clos'd eyelids forc'd a piercing ray,
And rous'd my senses where entranc'd I lay.
Trembling I wake, and with surprise behold
The cave all delug'd with ethereal gold,
With beaming glories too refin'd for sense,
And forms celestial half departing thence.
In Mary's arms I saw the infant lie,
And mercy beaming from his heavenly eye;
While rays of glory from his temple pour,
And other streams of modest light devour.

L. 695. *Faint did the lamp on neighbouring Edar burn.*] The watch-tower of Edar, in the fields of Bethlehem, north east from the town.

I kneel adoring, and my tongue employ,
And lift my eyes to testify my joy.
But soon I rose impress'd with sudden fear;
For at the cave I heard some footsteps near;
Some sounds confus'd loud conversation yield,
Like that of rustics hastening to their field.

" To shield my charge I hied me to the gate,
And in the passage either stood or sate.
But guess my wonder, when at length I spy,
Just as the morn began to gild the sky,
A troop of shepherds, harmless, meek, and mild,
By Heav'n directed to the new-born child;
Who, bowing low, with earnestness inquire
For Israel's monarch and the world's Desire.
Amaz'd, I ask'd how they the news had heard,
Ere day had dawn'd, or visiter appear'd?
When two young men who could relate it best,
With chaplets crown'd, made answer for the rest:
Claius, who lately the lewd town had left,
Of his romantic, foolish hopes bereft,
Whom bounteous Heav'n, with all he valued dear,
Indulg'd in peace with his Urania here:
Strephon, who did with modesty pretend
To be, and was, till vice prevail'd, his friend;

For since this time, on many a vain pretence
He left the plains and lost his innocence.
And now his soul, devoid of every grace,
Appears as steel'd and harden'd as his face,
Foul as those loathsome brands his body bears,
And black as that dissembling robe he wears.
His flagrant vice deceitful garments shroud
To veil the eyes of the deluded crowd.
I saw him lately too ambitious grown
His once lov'd Claius or himself to own.
Among the priests the title which he bears
Is Malchi—suited to the garb he wears.
With these associates daily he blasphemes
The Lord of glory, at whose death he aims.
Alas, how chang'd! When innocent and young,
With Claius thus Christ's birth he sweetly sung:"

A CHRISTMAS CAROL BY THE SHEPHERDS.

STREPHON.

" How, Claius, are we dumb with joy?
Come, tune thy pipe to carols sweet:
Let's welcome the celestial boy,
And throw our garlands at his feet.

CLAIUS.

" I have a lamb as pure as snow,
Which my Urania smiling gave;
Yet this shall to his altars go,
Nor shall her eyes the victim save.

STREPHON.

" Mistaken swain! he ne'er requires
That with such off'rings we should part:
Go, give him pure and fair desires,
And praise him with a humble heart!

CLAIUS.

" Then all my hopes and all my fears
I'll to their ancient Lord restore,
And all my sighs, and all my tears:
His love obtain'd, I ask no more."

" In strains like these their arts the shepherds tried,
When to my question Claius thus replied:

" In yonder plain that stretches by the flood,
Near Edar's tower, to guard our flocks we stood.
To cheer the night we join'd our varied powers,
And sooth'd by turns with songs the midnight hours.

Of ancient heroes some with tales proceed,
Who grasp'd the sword, or touch'd the trembling reed:
Great Jacob's travels these with warmth relate,
And these examine Reuben's crime and fate,
Infer strong cautions and impart advice
To guard those avenues which lead to vice.
Others extol the Euphratean swain
Who stretch'd Goliah on the groaning plain;—
Tell how Philistia mourn'd her champion dead,
And how, confus'd, her vanquish'd armies fled:—
How valiant David fought, and lov'd, and sung,
And how the vallies with his praises rung.

"While thus employ'd beneath the cloudless sky,
The cock's shrill notes proclaim'd the morning nigh:
We heard the sound, and saw each midnight star
Shoot oblique rays across the tranquil air;
Survey'd with pleasure the decline of night,
And hail'd the prospect of approaching light.
Old Ægon, starting with amazement, cries,
"See, shepherds, see, descending from the skies

L. 779. *Great Jacob's travels these with warmth relate, &c.*] A probable subject for their songs and discourses, it being in this very place where he pitched his tent, Gen. xxxv. 21.

" Yon radiant light, resembling solar flame,
" Or other beams I have not words to name,
" It seems a prodigy of vast intent,
" To burn the world, or mark some strange event,
" From its new course it cannot be the sun,
" For night has yet some tedious hours to run.
" Instead of mounting, it with speed descends,
" And to our tents its wond'rous journey bends."
He, trembling, paus'd, though more he meant to say;
For soon the light diffus'd a flood of day.
The ewes arose, and into flocks divide,
The little lambs ran bleating by their side.
Our faithful dogs their sudden fears betray'd,
And none besides my old *Lycisca* bay'd.
We prostrate fell, as it diffus'd its rays,
Nor could sustain the splendour of the blaze.
When lo! a youth beyond all mortals fair,
Who seem'd celestial by his mien and air,
In pleasing accents thus the silence broke,
And in these strains the recent wonder spoke:"

" Bless'd swains! I bring no terrors to affright,
" Or mock your hopes with phantoms of the night.

" Dispatch'd, I come from Heav'n's Almighty
King,
" And to your ears the happiest tidings bring.
" To all mankind, on this auspicious morn,
" Th' incarnate Saviour of the world is born,
" Near David's city, where in days of old
" The royal shepherd did protect his fold.
" Go then, and find him wrapp'd in swaddling bands
" Who grasps all nature with his mighty hands.
" This night a stable claims his humble birth
" Who stretch'd the skies and built the solid earth."
Thus having said, he drew the veil aside,
And glitt'ring Angels throng'd on every side,
Thick as those floating motes which seem to stray,
And dance refulgent in the beams of day.
Celestial voices then our fears remove,
While thus they sing those hymns they learn'd
above :

L. 827. *This night a stable claims his humble birth.*] By the word stable there is more liberty allowed than if it had been manger, the Greek φατνη signifying both, answering I think pretty exactly to Præsepe in the Latin. However, all antiquity have agreed that Christ was born in a cave, not a house, as Grotius proves out of Justin and others.

THE SONG OF THE ANGELS.

I.

" Glory to him who reigns on high,
To Heav'n's imperial majesty !
To him who sits upon the throne,
The great ineffable Three-One !

II.

" Peace from the Prince of Peace we bring,
An amnesty from heav'n's high King,
Who at the Saviour's welcome birth
Scatters pardons round the earth.

III.

" Thunders *We* must use no more,
In which the law was giv'n before;
But strive rebellious man to move
With mild good-will and heavenly love."

" While hymning thus they parted from our sight,
And soar'd to heav'n amidst celestial light.
By their direction we forsook our fold,
To see those wonders which the Angels told:
And, thus arriv'd, desire to feast our eyes
On him who now within the stable lies."

"To their request consent I quickly gave,
And introduc'd them to the well-known cave.
With solemn rev'rence when his face they spied,
In speechless awe they gaze unsatisfied;
But while they wonder with renew'd delight,
Each moment brought new miracles to sight.
Amaz'd they see a radiant light unfold,
And rocks and straw assume the hue of gold;
Through the dark cave the bursting glories rise
With brighter beams than e'er adorn'd the skies;
While round the babe new radiations play,
Which light afresh this artificial day.
Their rustic garlands then the swains bestow,
And odorous flowers in rich profusion throw;
Some in their hands a cruse of honey bear,
Or fragrant balm's inestimable tear.
As grateful incense these were freely given,
As such accepted by the King of Heaven.
These gifts bestow'd, they separate again,
And spread the tidings round the joyful plain.

"The evening star had clos'd the seventh day
Since Christ appear'd enshrin'd in human clay;
And on the eighth glad morn, with joy we bear
The holy infant to the house of prayer:

Whence, as the law directs, that sign he bore
Which mark'd our great progenitors before,
Inscrib'd in blood upon his tender skin,
Though free from actual and traductive sin;
And the next moon, as holy rites requir'd,
We with the babe to Solyma retir'd,
In due obedience to Jehovah's word,
To dedicate him to his heav'nly Lord.

"Soon as our feet to Salem's temple came,
The fragrant incense shot a purer flame:
In lambent smiles, as if from orders given,
It seem'd to glow with gratitude to Heaven.
The pious mother, on devotion bent,
Straight to the altar with her offering went;
Of harmless doves she took a lovely pair,
While all her soul dissolv'd in grateful prayer:
These as memorials reach'd the bless'd abode,
And found acceptance at the throne of God.

"This double sacrifice was scarcely done,
To purge herself and dedicate her Son,
Ere through the crowd prophetic Simeon came,
Of noted virtue and unblemish'd fame.

On him, when cold decrepit age had spread
The hoar of winter on his feeble head,
And he one evening in the temple stay'd,
And for redemption most devoutly pray'd,
A lovely youth, who seem'd divinely fair,
Smil'd on his face, and bade him not despair;—
Told him, though life was to the margin run,
And silver hairs proclaim'd his setting sun,
That ere the weary wheels of life stood still,
God would the wishes of his soul fulfil:—
That Christ should come to bless the world with peace,
Before his tongue should from petition cease.
This day the same celestial form appear'd,
While in his closet he his prayer preferr'd,
Stopp'd his devotion as he prostrate lay,
And to the temple beckon'd him away.
The good old man with joy the signal takes,
And full of transport for the temple makes;
His feet no more their former strength denied,
And useless crutches now were thrown aside;
Through all the crowd he venerably press'd,
And seiz'd the child, and lodg'd him in his breast;

Then full of vigour to the altar ran,
And with this song, inspir'd by Heav'n, began:

SIMEON'S SONG.

" Yes, now thy servant dies, he gladly dies!
This life, dear Lord, prolong no more;
But as thou promis'dst me before,
In peace now close my eyes:
My eyes, which that dear object now have met,
For which so long they gaz'd in vain,
For whose delay so long I did complain:
I've seen the Sun of righteousness arise;
'Tis time my glimm'ring lamps forsake the skies,
And in the shades of death in silence set.

II.

" The world already hails his welcome birth:
Haste then, and humble gifts prepare
To meet and bless th' Almighty Heir,
The King of heaven and earth:
Him the lost Gentiles shall their Saviour find,
Him Heathen lands their Lord shall own,
Their Lord and God, him who alone
Imparts both eyes and eye-sight to the blind.

III.

" Ah stupid nation! Wilt thou still refuse,
Still hate thy Saviour! Ah thrice harden'd Jews!

Grant Heaven these boding fears may not be true!
Rejected by your Prince as he by you!
But ah! what cruel truths I see
In the dark womb of future days!
To what a cursed throne will ye your Saviour raise,
And crown his head with thorns and infamy!
What woes, what swords, bless'd mother, are reserv'd for thee!

IV.

"But Heaven at last to mercy seems inclin'd,
For see a glorious scene behind!
He comes, he comes, these eyes again shall see,
Again, dear Saviour, welcome thee,
The clouds thy chariot, and thy wings the wind!
In Zion shall appear
The great Deliverer:
This stubborn nation then shall strive no more,
But him who once they pierc'd adore,
Now Israel's glory, not her shame."

"Thus having said, his soul to bliss retir'd;
Thus good old Simeon with a smile expir'd.

"But scenes as strange succeed to wonders past,
As each new wave rides closely on the last.
No age nor sex but must its Lord confess,
A prophet there, but here a prophetess,
Anna, renown'd, a matron and a wife,

For spotless virtue and a blameless life;
Who claim'd descent from Asher's fruitful race,
Fam'd in her youth for every female grace,
Then sought by lovers, nor at last denied
To bless the happiest by the name of bride.
Through seven long years they no dissension knew;
Their flame was pure, and grace preserv'd it new;
Their hopes were mutual, and their souls the same,
In nought they differ'd but in sex and name.
But when he lay among the silent dead,
And his immortal part to God had fled,
A second love her heavenly thoughts denied,
And in her breast all worldly pleasure died.
She, from that hour, in hope of sacred light
Within the temple waited day and night;
Fasted, and pray'd, and saw through faith the day
That in her Lord should Israel's wrong repay.
Oft her chaste soul to heaven would take its flight,
Lost and absorb'd in glory infinite:
When thus retir'd, no look, no thought abroad,
Nothing she knew besides herself and God;
Nay, sometimes scarce distinct herself could call,
Abstracted from herself——for God was all.
From Heav'n she learn'd the day, the hour precise,
When we approach'd to bring our sacrifice;

The flatt'ring tales his parasites had pour'd,
And which with haste his greedy soul devour'd,—
Those tales which lately, to enhance his fame,
Had prostituted the Messiah's name,
Now as an opiate to ambition fail'd,
And all the horrors of his soul reveal'd.
But still the tyrant, though averse to good,
Seem'd with the cunning of the fox endued,
And hence the Sages to his palace brings
With pomp and grandeur not unworthy kings.
Dissembling well, his malice to conceal,
He lavish'd praises on their ardent zeal;
And, like a tiger crouching to destroy,
With base intentions prais'd the sacred boy.

three sons, Alexander, Aristobulus, and Antipater, the last just as he was himself expiring; and indeed if they were like their father, it were a pity that any of the breed should have been left. Vid. Jos. Antiq. lib. 6. cap. 17. and lib. 7.

L. 1029. *Has prostituted the Messiah's name.*] Eusebius, in his history, gives an account of that sect among the Jews mentioned in the Evangelists, and called Herodians, who, as he says, flattered Herod the Great with the title of the Messiah, celebrating a religious annual feast to his honour. It is perhaps worth remark, that all those who unjustly usurped that incommunicable title, either in those ages or since, as he, Barochebas, Judas, and in our times David Sabbati-Sevi, and others, came to miserable ends.

" Bless'd be th' unutterable Name," he said,
" Whose heav'nly glories are so richly shed;
" Whose mercy has to Gentile worlds reveal'd
" That promis'd Prince, from ages past conceal'd.
" O that I could the Royal Infant greet,
" And cast my crown and sceptre at his feet!
" O bliss supreme! could Herod's hands but bear
" The world's great Sovereign to the house of prayer,
" There with devotion on his mandates wait,
" And serve in triumph greater than this state."
Such were the snares the sanguine tyrant spread,
Such the delusion which his speech display'd!

" Soon as our home the eastern Sages grac'd,
They saw his snares, and his intentions trac'd;
In all his wiles their opening eyes perceiv'd
The impious frauds their innocence believ'd.
Nor was the fraud by these alone sustain'd,
His Royal word the Sanhedrim conven'd;
He then inquir'd of those most deeply read
In what our prophets had foretold and said,
And ask'd with much solicitude the place
Which by our books Messiah's birth should grace.
In their debates the Sanhedrim declare,—
But you perhaps, most learned Sir, was there

Whose friendly voice prohibited their stay,
And bade them travel by another way;
Nor call on Herod, who with rage pursued
The heav'nly babe, and thirsted for his blood.
Some precious gifts the Sages then prefer,
Of gold and silver, frankincense, and myrrh;
And being thus by friendly visions warn'd,
By different roads they to their homes return'd.

"Herod no sooner found himself deceiv'd
By men whose faith his sophistry believ'd,
Than horrid oaths an easy passage made,
And all the secrets of his soul betray'd;
And, though the Sages were beyond his power,
The thunder ended in a bloody shower.
A mandate fierce 'gainst Bethlehem he pass'd,
The first on record, and we hope the last,
(My bleeding heart relates the fact with pain,)
That all the infant children should be slain.
Through every street the doleful tidings fly,
And lamentations echoed through the sky.
At length from heaven a glorious angel came,
The same who freed my lovely spouse from blame:
In all his visage I beheld concern,
And mingling grief and indignation burn.

But ere I spoke, he call'd aloud—" Arise,
" Nor stay one moment to express surprise :
" Depart this instant, and the babe convey
" Where Egypt's subjects milder kings obey.
" There lodge awhile, nor thence attempt to move
" Till thou receiv'st commission from above.
" For Herod aims with more than hellish strife
" To war with Heaven, and take the infant's life."

" He 'd scarcely ended, ere the guards were come,
Equipp'd like butchers to supply the tomb.
The cohorts stretch before the city gate,
Where they like furies for admittance wait,
To pour upon us like a mighty flood,
And bathe their daggers in the childrens' blood.

" Starting, we rose, of every sound afraid,
Nor in the town one lingering moment stay'd;
But, warn'd by Heav'n to flee approaching fate,
We pass'd in silence through a private gate.
Our weary feet had no great distance gone
Before the streets with flaming torches shone:
From a small hill we saw the dismal glare
Moving like lightning through the troubled air.

From our retreat we heard a doleful cry
Of female voices which assail'd the sky;
Shriek answer'd shriek, each groan another meets,
And cries of murder echoed through the streets.
Here frantic mothers for their children pray'd,
And fathers there the murd'rous foes invade.
Here mangl'd infants from the windows fall,
There bleeding babes are dash'd against the wall,
Or with brute hands by pikes and halberts die,
While lifeless heaps on bloody pavements lie.
What nameless horrors must have form'd the scene,
Thus heard in part and indistinctly seen?

"These mournful woes the prophet clearly saw,
If not the tyrant who should give the blow;
And hence his language pointedly declar'd—
"Loud lamentations were in Rama heard;
"Her murder'd offspring weeping Rachel mourn'd,
"And saw her joys to deepest anguish turn'd:
"And hence her soul disconsolately griev'd;
"And, lost to hope, refus'd to be reliev'd."
Such was the picture which the prophet drew,
Such the events which prov'd the record true!

"The virgin, shrieking, felt her soul distress'd,
And clasp'd the infant to her trembling breast;

Nor durst we more the horrid scene survey,
Or keep our station till returning day;
The infant's safety urg'd our speedy flight
Beneath the sable canopy of night.
We march'd at once, impell'd by what we fear'd,
And, ere the glimm'ring of the dawn appear'd,
With painful steps the dreary path pursued
To the rough margin of Tekoah's wood.
Beth-Hacc'rem's hill we shunn'd with cautious fear,
For Herod's arts had station'd soldiers there.
The forests pass'd, we Siddim's plains came down
On the third morn to Sheba's noted town.
Thence leaving Palestine, our course we take
Across the sands, by Sirbon's changing lake,

L. 1186. *To the rough margin of Tekoah's wood.*] The forest or wilderness of Tekoah lies a little south of Bethlehem, in the way to Egypt; and Beth Haccerem is near it: we read in Jer. vi. 1. of both the places together: blow the trumpet in Tekoah (which signifies the sound of a trumpet), set up a sign of fire in Beth-Haccerem; a place I suppose much of the nature of our beacons. Now this Beth-Haccerem may either signify the house of strong men, or the house of rustics: the former interpretation I follow, supposing it a strong garrison, probably in some narrow pass of that wilderness.

L. 1192. *Across the sands, by Sirbon's changing lake.*] This lake had formerly an inlet into the sea; which being in time choked up, it now still grows less and less. It is reckoned the utmost eastern bound of Egypt.

And Casius' mount so much renown'd of late
For mighty Pompey's sepulchre and fate.
Here first we enter'd Mizraim's fruitful soil,
Which asks no rain, water'd alone by Nile.
Near old Bethshemesh we the river cross'd,
Which its old gods and older name has lost.
From Heliopolis we travell'd on
To the proud walls of modern Babylon;
But here we durst not terminate our cares
So near the frontiers of the tyrant's snares.

L. 1194. *For mighty Pompey's sepulchre and fate.*] Near this was Pompey the Great basely killed, and afterwards buried by a poor soldier. But the Emperor Adrian erected a beautiful monument in the same place.

L. 1197. *Near old Bethshemesh we the river cross'd.*] Now Heliopolis. Its ancient name seems to have been On, hence called Onii by Ptolemy, but by the Jews Bethshemesh, or the House of the Sun, near akin to Heliopolis, or the City of the Sun, one of the cities which, it was prophesied, should leave its idols, and speak the language of Canaan, to which place many authors think our Saviour was carried; but I go a little further, as Vida does, and fix him more in the inland country.

L. 1200. *To the proud walls of modern Babylon*] This Babylon, from whence many think St. Peter wrote his first epistle (though Bellarmine will have it Rome, rather than not get him there at all), has been a considerable place, though nothing like its name-sake in Chaldæa. It stood just at the confluence of the rivers Trajanus and Nilus.

We still pierce deeper, and at last reside
At stately Memphis, Egypt's royal pride.
Here we beheld those piles which wound the sky,
Beneath whose top the rolling clouds pass by,
Huge useless wonders, wens on nature's face,
The younger brothers of the Babel race;
Which only serve to mark ambition's springs,
The strength of art, and vanity of kings.
Thus Memphis serv'd, with Providence our guide,
To give that safety Palestine denied;
Where in obscurity we humbly mov'd,
Loving our neighbours, and by them belov'd.

" But since the sun, to show departing day,
Shines from the west, and darts an oblique ray,
I soon must pause; nor need I now relate,
What all must know, ambitious Herod's fate.
His end was dreadful, but with justice given,
To mark the vengeance of insulted Heaven.
'Twas then an angel by divine command
Call'd us from Mizraim's to our native land:

L. 1205. *Here we beheld those piles which wound the sky.*] All that we can certainly tell the reader concerning those unwieldy wonders, the Pyramids, is, that they were made for nobody knows what, and built by nobody knows whom: they stand most of them about Memphis, on the west bank of the river.

Two tedious days in fruitless search we spent,
Two dreary nights we gave our sorrow vent;
Nor rest our feet, nor sleep our eyelids found,
To ease our souls of their corroding wound.
These efforts fruitless, we at length repair
To ask assistance in the house of prayer,
Resolv'd to follow the directions giv'n,
And yield submission to the will of Heav'n.
On entering here, to our surprise we found
Christ in the midst, and doctors seated round.
Each on his words with deep attention hung,
And bless'd the sound of his harmonious tongue;
Admir'd his wisdom which his age outran,
In years a child, in speech beyond a man."

"Was this the child," good Nicodemus cried,
"Who ask'd our doctors questions, and replied?
"I then was there, presided in the schools,
"And heard him reason by establish'd rules,
"Gaz'd on his face, the wond'rous youth admir'd,
"And half believ'd him by a God inspir'd.
"Sublime and lofty, evident and clear,
"All his expressions, thoughts, and notions were;
"Each look, each word, proclaim'd celestial grace,
"Of birth superior to the human race.

All others infinitely this o'erpowers,
Where Heav'n's high King is born as well as ours.
Through future days the Royal babe I see,
How long his rule, how vast his realms shall be,
Through boundless space and time he reigns eternally."

"The same," said Cephas, "Joseph did repeat,
When these momentous facts he did relate.
From hence the Sages information drew,
And facts have prov'd these great predictions true.
Their faith grew strong when they beheld the star,
Which rose and shone to guide them where we were,
Nor did their feet our humble roof disdain,
Nor did they long in Herod's courts remain,
But mov'd with speed the Prince of Peace to find,
For Israel's sceptre and the world's design'd.
But ere they left his *formula* of state,
He gave injunctions which conceal'd his hate;
That, having found him, they should bring him word,
That he with homage might adore the Lord.

"But this fair semblance veil'd a black intent,
Too soon discover'd by the sad event;
For they no sooner enter'd our abode,
Than they receiv'd a messenger from God,

" And in his lodgings reason with your friend
" On all those topics which you recommend ;
" To find if truth will those encomiums bear
" Which so profusely grace his character."

" Nobly resolv'd," the pious saint replied,
" Grant me the honour to become your guide !"
They join ; and all the company divide.
Joseph, well pleas'd, saluted every guest,
And the next morning fix'd to hear the rest.

CONTENTS

OF THE

THIRD BOOK.

THE introduction, from the happiness and pleasure of pious contemplation and meditation. Nicodemus and the three disciples find our Saviour at Gethsemane. His discourse with him concerning several mysteries of the christian faith. Nicodemus departs, well satisfied with the conference; and Gamaliel being indisposed, the meeting and further relation of the three disciples is adjourned the next day from Joseph's garden to Gamaliel's house, where the apostles proceed with their discourse of our Saviour; giving an account of the Baptist's history, his character, preaching, prophesies, and baptism; to which many come, and among the rest our Saviour, who is attested there by the descent of the Holy Ghost, like a dove, accompanied with a voice from Heaven; at which the people being about to take him by force and make him a king, he retires thence into the wilderness, as well to escape their importunity, and prepare for his approaching work, as by God's permission to be tempted of the devil. The description of that part of the wilderness whither our Saviour went. In the mean while, Lucifer, alarmed at the wonders of our Saviour's birth, and his appearance now at Jordan, and doubting him to be the

true Messiah prophesied of to destroy his kingdom, had observed him at his baptism; but frighted thence by thunder, he retires into the abyss, arises thence at midnight, and gives the signal to all the fiends to meet him; his speech on the occasion of their meeting. Moloch is for undertaking to destroy our Saviour; but Lucifer forbids him, and himself sets about it: he finds our Saviour, and accosts him in the shape of an old man almost famished, pressing him with his first temptation, to work a miracle, and change stones into bread: But our Saviour, knowing him through his disguise, rejects his temptation. Night approaching, he attacks him with others, raising a tempest, and several other ways endeavouring to affright him, but without success. The next morning he accosts him in a glorious form, though not denying himself, finding that he was discovered, but pretending love to mankind, especially to our Saviour, and offering him a banquet, which he had provided in the midst of a paradise raised in the wilderness. The song of two attendant spirits to invite our Saviour to eat of the feast which, on his refusal, vanishes; when the devil, enraged, changes himself into the form of a dragon, and, snatching up our Saviour, hurries him away through the air, and sets him on a pinnacle of the temple; whence he shews him, below, the priests, the Jews and Gentiles, in their three courts gazing at him, the Roman garrison taking their pleasure in the amphitheatre, and the castle Antonia unguarded; persuading him to descend in the flame of the altar, that the Jews might acknowledge him,

and under his conduct redeem their freedom; which he might more securely do, because God had promised to give his angels charge over him. Our Saviour having answered his text with another, the devil once more snatches him up and carries him to the top of Pisgah, representing in the air all the kingdoms of the world, with their riches and glory, and shews him the Ishmaelites travelling through the desarts with caravans of gold and spices; the kingdoms of Ethiopia, the isles of the Mediterranean, Italy, Rome, France, Britain; then Persia, over to China and India, to the East, the principal rarities whereof he describes; and still more East, cross an undiscovered Strait, a new world, whither one of his attendants was then conducting a colony of Tartars; offering him his choice of all these, or, if none would satisfy him, to raise him a throne on Pisgah, and make him King of both those worlds, if, by way of homage for them, he would bow down and adore him. At which blasphemous proposition, our Saviour instantly commands the devil to leave him, the time wherein he was permitted to tempt him being now elapsed, who accordingly vanishes away in a cloud of smoke and fire.

THE

LIFE

OF

CHRIST.

BOOK III.

SOON as the night her sable reign began,
Repose was sought by bird, and beast, and man;
Their cares concluded with declining day,
And sleep and darkness held congenial sway.
Not so the Saviour; his unwearied love
Held high communion with the pow'rs above;
His cares for man refreshing sleep deny,
On whose behalf his soul ascends the sky.
He from the world's confus'd and restless noise
Retir'd in shade to taste celestial joys.
His thoughts, all active, walk on nature's springs,
And view the causes and effects of things;
Then mounting high on contemplation soar
To those fair regions where he reign'd before,
Survey that glory which he left behind
To take our nature and redeem mankind.

Beyond this world his vig'rous mind could trace
Angelic natures through the realms of space.
His mounting soul with ardours all its own,
In prayer and praises reach'd Jehovah's throne,
And left behind those cares we feel below
To stab our joys, and add new stings to woe.

Go then, my soul, through time and matter fly,
Thy Saviour follow, and ascend the sky!
Survey those oceans of unbounded space,
Which lose all measures both of time and place;
Where clust'ring glories in succession shine,
Through faith and practice made in promise thine.

But ere our spirits find that safe retreat,
Afflictive storms and hurricanes must beat.
On shelves and quicksands we are daily toss'd,
And many foundering are ingulf'd and lost.
This dangerous voyage, claiming all our care,
Asks faith, and hope, and penitence, and prayer,
Some skilful hand the helm of life to guide
Across the stream of passion's driving tide.
Since then such dangers lurk on every coast,
On which some millions every year are lost,

L. 17. *Beyond this world his vigorous mind could trace.*] All the visible frame or system of the creation.

Through trackless oceans we must work our way
From circling horrors to eternal day.
Thrice happy they who here beneath the storm,
Lodg'd in some creek, their various tasks perform;
Who watch the polar star's diminish'd rays,
Or greatly bless'd enjoy the solar blaze;
Who view the cross, and see their Saviour there,
And in his wounds find refuge in despair.

If from the cradle to the peaceful grave
We trace his life who died the world to save,
No dubious deeds, no problematic void
Appears to stamp his character with shade.
By day his miracles and language taught,
By night the Saviour close retirement sought.
His evening hours he spent in fervent prayer,
Till dews descended through the midnight air;
In awful solitude his moments pass'd,
And found a temple in each dreary waste.
Thus life's whole term, compos'd of light and shade,
Christ to his purposes subservient made.

Among those solitudes which he survey'd,
That was the chief in which he was betray'd:
'Twas here in prayer the solemn hours he spent,
When Nicodemus to his lodgings went.

" The seeds of vice have reach'd the springs of life,
" And smother'd virtue in the dreadful strife;
" Hence foul contagion reigns in every part,
" And angry passions rule both head and heart;
" For fallen nature does corrupt the whole,
" The change must penetrate through all the soul.
" From this sad source those fatal streams begin
" Which taint the actions of mankind with sin;
" And hence those torrents of corruption flow,
" Which lead through time to everlasting woe.
" The truths I teach to check their deadly force,
" Aim to reform their intellectual source;
" For every work is unavailing pain,
" Which lops but branches, while the roots remain.
" Thus a new birth, which renovates the soul,
" And gives new life to the corrupted whole,
" Becomes essential; and is freely giv'n
" To change and qualify mankind for heav'n.
" This second birth in all its parts I preach;
" My saints enjoy the glorious truths I teach,
" And, having learn'd the doctrines I explain,
" Proclaim with me——YE MUST BE BORN AGAIN."

On facts so strange the sage, in thought profound,
Mus'd for some moments, but no utterance found:
At length replied—" My reasoning powers are cross'd,
" And all my views are in confusion lost:
" I feel myself unable to explain
" How man, when aged, can be born again?"
Our Lord rejoin'd—" Art thou so meanly read
" In all the learning of the mighty dead?
" Canst thou no further than thy senses see,
" And ask from ign'rance—" How can these things be?"
" Alas! can others from your lectures learn
" Truths which their teachers cannot yet discern?
" Thou know'st the senses are by reason weigh'd,
" Which in her turn is by religion sway'd.
" When reason soars, the senses quit the field;
" And both must, vanquish'd, to religion yield.
" Can man's weak reason fathom boundless might,
" Or stretch its lines to measure infinite?
" Can nature's laws creation's Lord confine,
" Or in one deed against his will combine?
" Has he no power to find another source,
" To form new laws, and counteract their force?

" Has he no modes his favours to convey,
" Though men know not the reason, time, or way?
" Go track the wind, and tell me where it goes,
" From what strange source the furious current blows?
" How storms are form'd beneath his guardian care,
" Who in meanders whirls the fluid air?
" How, though invisible to human sight,
" All bodies yield to its impetuous weight?
" Thou knowest well (vain man constrain'd must own)
" Millions of facts whose causes lie unknown;
" And as this fluid, on our bodies press'd,
" Affords an evidence by all confess'd,
" Though the great cause in secret lies conceal'd,
" While the effects are every day reveal'd,
" So the new birth in each converted heart
" Turns grief to joy, and bids its fears depart;
" For know, the doctrines which I teach, contain
" Truths most sublime, to purge man's deadly stain;—
" Truths, which thy reason must in vain explore;
" They roll an ocean which commands no shore.
" Hence vanquish'd reason must forsake the field,
" And to the light of revelation yield.

" Thine eyes have witness'd the auspicious day
" When God came down to visit human clay;
" And, ere they close in death's embrace, shall see
" His human part suspended on a tree.
" Then, as the serpent, in the wilds display'd
" To heal those wounds the living scorpions made,
" Imparted life to those who gasp'd for breath,
" And rescued thousands from the jaws of death,
" So shall the Saviour, fasten'd to the wood,
" Procure salvation with his reeking blood;
" And all mankind, the blessing to receive,
" Must catch the streams—and those who taste, shall live.
" Such are the efforts Heaven designs, to prove
" Its unexampled, unexhausted love."

On truths so strange the Rabbi seem'd intent,
And half a convert from the garden went.
From what he learn'd, more latent facts he guess'd
And grew impatient to obtain the rest;
Then to his house reluctantly retir'd,
Pleas'd with the interview his soul desir'd.

The sun had scarcely chas'd the shades of night
Ere Nicodemus hail'd returning light;

And to his friend Gamaliel walks in haste,
To tell the wonders of the evening past.
He, indispos'd, of Joseph did desire
That to his house th' apostles might retire.
Consent obtain'd, the little party came
To publish facts and spread their Master's fame;
To mark the progress of prevailing light,
And place salvation in the Rabbis' sight.
Regal'd with viands of becoming fare,
With neatness dress'd without ambitious care,
Gamaliel then his anxious thoughts express'd,
And James and John and Peter thus address'd:
" The facts we heard when we assembl'd last
" Are too sublime to leave our minds in haste:
" We therefore ask you, fully to explain
" Those various branches which must yet remain.
" Your former statements, so distinct and clear,
" Urge this request—we therefore pause to hear."

Thus having said, renown'd Gamaliel sat,
While his two friends in expectation wait;
When James arose, and with a holy sigh
Proceeded thus to give a full reply:
" If past narrations so much wonder gain,
What can be left for facts which yet remain?—

Our Master's trials, abstinence, distress,
And war with Satan in the wilderness?—
His wond'rous passage through the troubled air,
By hell assail'd, though God's peculiar care?—
His aërial journey to the mountain's brow,
Which did its snares in endless prospects show?—
His station on the pinnacle alone,—
His being urg'd to raise his bread from stone?
The firm resistance which in all he show'd,
Proclaim'd his soul with heavenly power endow'd.

"But first permit my willing tongue to say
How Christ, baptiz'd, did God's commands obey.
He, to fulfil the law, to Jordan came,
Where Zachary's son assum'd the Baptist's name.
Here Enon's stream, not far from Beth'lem's walls,
By Salim rolls, and into Jordan falls.
Unknown to fame, the Baptist from a child
Had liv'd retir'd in Judah's fertile wild;—
Had spent his time among the rustic swains,
Whose flocks and herds enjoy'd the hills and plains.
Austere he liv'd, remote from all resorts
Of base ambition and intrigues of courts.
Here, while to more exalted fortunes born,
Earth's sickly joys his soul had learnt to scorn;

For such mean clothing and coarse fare he us'd
As frugal nature bounteously produc'd ;
Rough camel's hair his spreading shoulders bore,
Just like those spoils which ancient heroes wore:
So far'd Elijah, when his food he found
Hung on the trees, or spread upon the ground:
Thus when wild honey on his table lay,
The luscious blessing made his festal day.
We learn from hence how little nature wants,
Besides those favours which her bounty grants;
And also learn how difficult to please
A pamper'd palate in luxurious ease :
His life severe, his language, and his dress,
The rigid virtues of his soul express.

" He, arm'd from Heav'n, with zeal and thunder came
To warn the guilty of impending flame ;
To rouse the vile along the shores he went
By Jordan's banks, and cried aloud—" Repent:
" Forsake thy sins, unhappy Israel ; turn,
" Or writhe in flames which must for ever burn.
" Full in thy view the dreadful day appears,
" Which marks the actions of departed years:
" It comes apace ; and all within the tomb,
" Or now alive, must meet a righteous doom.

" This glorious vault above, no more the same,
" Shall like an ov'n teem with the spreading flame,
" Fed and sustain'd by that All-powerful breath
" Which gives us life—or blasts us into death;
" Large flakes of fire shall roll in circles round,
" And burn the stubble from the blazing ground.
" Then Sadducees and Pharisees must go,
" And bear their punishments in endless woe;
" The bold blasphemer, and the atheist lewd,
" And painted hypocrites, a vip'rous brood,
" Shall find their portion in the burning tide,
" And curse for ever each deceitful guide.

" Ye guilty souls, what led you to incline
" To ask for grace, or shun the wrath divine?
" Where is your church, within whose pale by stealth
" Ye basely crept from policy or wealth?
" Does conscience wake? are guilty fears alarm'd?
" Does Heav'n appear with all its vengeance arm'd?
" O brood of vipers! why against the skies
" Maintain your warfare, and believe in lies?

L. 270: *Shall like an ov'n teem with the spreading flame.*] This, and what follows, are the substance of Mal. iv. "Behold the day cometh that shall burn as an oven."

" Fly, wretches, fly from your impending fate,
" And ask forgiveness ere it be too late.
" This sacred moment grace unfolds her gates,
" And sovereign mercy your acceptance waits;
" Repentance through the Saviour now display,
" The path which leads to everlasting day.
" Hereby your souls may find that healing grace
" Which shines reveal'd to save the human race.
" Go see the Sun of Righteousness arise,
" And on its glories feast your longing eyes;
" It shines to heal each mortal wound within,
" And cure the poison of that serpent—sin.
" He, rais'd on high, compassionately brings
" Life and salvation in his healing wings;
" Who look may live, though now they gasp for breath,
" And find deliv'rance from the pangs of death;
" These the true Canaan promis'd shall possess,
" While others perish in the wilderness;
" These through the world shall in full triumph go,
" And through their Lord subdue each hell-born foe:
" Lands yet unknown his laws shall entertain,
" And o'er the nations the Messiah reign."

"These thundering calls the Jews, alarm'd, receiv'd,
And numbers, listening, trembl'd and believ'd.
You know what crowds from various regions came,
And bare me witness to the Baptist's fame—
Some who in wild Perea wander'd wide,
Near Jabbock's ford, or Arnon's streamy side;
Penuel and Succoth many sons supply,
Whose haughty fathers were compell'd to fly;
Their hosts with Midian's from great Gideon fled
On those fair fields where Jacob's cattle fed;—
From Jabesh some, where Saul such succours brought,
And some from Gilboa where that monarch fought:
He warr'd with Heaven, and in the dreadful strife
Lost, in one day, his sons, his crown, and life.
Those various tribes with haste to Jordan go,
Whose fruitful fields his waters overflow.
Some from Bethsaida far more distant came,
By Heaven directed, and the prophet's fame:

L. 315. *Some who in wild Perea wander'd wide.*] Of this Perea, Fuller thus speaks, lib. 1. p. 37. "Perea," says he, "is a country containing all the land once belonging to Reuben, Gad, and Manasseh, on the east of Jordan."

From strong Tiberias some, and some came down
From Tabor's mount, and fam'd Bethulia's town:
These from old Shalem, Thebes, and Bezek go;
From Pisgah these, and these from Jericho;
But thousands more from royal Salem come,
And half depopulate their native home.
You know how much our elders did esteem
The Baptist—know the message sent to him;
You know the honours all our senate paid,
And why they veil'd their sentiments in shade."

"Too well," Gamaliel with a sigh replied,
"I know that story and the senate's pride.
"These eyes have witness to the Baptist borne,
"And seen the evidence repell'd with scorn.
"Too well I know and dread the sad event;
"For he who speaks was by the senate sent
"To seize those truths which issued from his tongue,
"And try by sophistry to prove them wrong.
"My latest hour must mourn that fatal deed,
"When we rejected him—But, Sir, proceed."

"The Baptist now," said James, "had thousands seen
Cleans'd from the guilt and from the power of sin.

At length the Saviour to the Herald went;
But mark the strange, the wonderful event:
So soon as John his great Redeemer saw,
He paus'd in silence with religious awe;
With prostrate rev'rence at his feet he fell,
And boldly hail'd him King of Israel;
And, while astonish'd the spectators seem,
Trembling he asks to be baptiz'd of him.
The Saviour, smiling, begg'd him to desist,
And in an instant all his fears dismiss'd;
Explain'd those mandates which he must fulfil,
To do and suffer his great Father's will.
The wondering Sage reluctantly obey'd
This strange commission which his Lord display'd;
For well he knew that no unholy deed
Could or repentance or ablution need.

" No sooner Christ, who came mankind to save,
Had consecrated Jordan's limpid wave,—
Than in a moment all the clouds remove,
And give a passage to a mystic Dove.

L. 368. *Had consecrated Jordan's limpid wave.*] I mean only the setting apart or consecrating the element for that sacramental use.

Its brightness seem'd too glorious to behold,
Its breast was silver, and its wings were gold;
On every part celestial colours shine,
And all who saw it thought the form divine.
It mov'd majestic through the yielding air,
While Jesus knelt in ecstasy and prayer;
Its feet at length his sacred temples press'd,
While heav'nly ardour fill'd his holy breast;
When lo, the clouds with lambent lightning broke,
A voice was heard—and thus Jehovah spoke:
" Behold my Son, by miracles approv'd,
" My sacred Image, and my best Belov'd,
" Whom sov'reign mercy to the world has giv'n
" To die for sin, and bring mankind to heaven."

" The voice was known of heaven's eternal Lord,
And all who heard it trembled and ador'd.
The wondering crowd with eager kindness ran
To greet Jehovah in the form of man;
Their hands and hearts officious honours bring,
And every voice conspir'd to hail him king.
But he was not for earthly kingdoms born,
The crown he wore was made of rugged thorn.
His soul had learnt to scorn earth's glittering toys,
And nobly aim at more substantial joys.

Hence, when assail'd, he to the desert flies,
And trusts in Him who rules both earth and skies,
To shun that fame which others court in vain,
And which too many damn themselves to gain.
'Twas here, in dreary solitude retir'd,
He met that combat which his foe desir'd.

" A dreadful wild there is which stretches wide
Its lonely skirts by fruitful Edom's side;
It stands impervious to the solar light,—
The home of horror and perpetual night,
Not once illum'd by one intruding star
To guide or cheer the wand'ring traveller.
Along these wastes unceasing tempests howl,
And underneath tremendous currents roll.
No flow'rs on the unwholesome surface grew,
Nor shrub nor tree, except the pois'nous yew,
And weeping cypress for sad hearses made,
And gloomy ebon casting deadly shade.
On these at times the furious lightnings broke,
And on their trunks the scars of thunder spoke.
If through this gloom a vacant spot was found,
Unwieldy serpents trail'd upon the ground;
While birds obscene, foul harpies, vultures fell,
With all the monstrous visages of hell,

Predicted mischief by their voice and face,
And added vocal horrors to the place.

" Such was the field, and such the dismal stage,
Where our great Captain did with hell engage!
Rapt in the Spirit, Jesus thither flies,
Ardent to combat for the glorious prize.
Nor did he wait this hour his strength to know;
His pow'r already had subdued the foe.
He, stung with envy, insolence, and pride,
In distant worlds his vanquish'd forces tried;
But when ambition found its efforts vain,
Transfix'd he fell with all his blasted train
To those abodes of horror and despair,
Which, doom'd by Heav'n, they must for ever bear.
Sometimes indeed, as mortals may perceive,
They sally forth as God may grant them leave;
When they, on wickedness intent, disperse
Mischief and murders through the universe.

" Successful here, the fiend commenc'd his reign
By introducing anarchy and pain;
On earth's long shores disseminating woe,
To add new converts to the realms below.
Full well he knew, when man in Eden fell,
And justly earn'd the miseries of hell,

L. 401—20. See Jer. ii. 6. Deut. viii. 15. and xxxii. 10.

A wond'rous voice was heard from Heav'n, which said
" The woman's Seed shall bruise the serpent's head."
This fact his mind revolv'd with conscious fear,
And oft he dreaded that his fall was near.
Himself alert, alert his watchful spies,
Had much discover'd with their prying eyes.
From spies at court who in close ambush lay,—
From spies that glitter'd in the beams of day,
Who in lone woods like lustful satyrs rove,
Or earthly fiends that blood and murder love,—
Much information had increas'd his store,
But still he fear'd, and still he sought for more.
Each dubious fact his active mind observ'd,
Was mark'd with caution, and with care preserv'd.

" But nothing yet had so alarm'd his fear
As Christ, whose deeds he watch'd with anxious care.
He heard and trembled when the Saviour pray'd,
And, lost in darkness, felt himself afraid :
He saw his life with prodigies begin,
And mark'd his footsteps, but perceiv'd no sin ;
By him beheld his various wiles subdued,
And Mary's Son with much suspicion view'd.

But when he saw, at Jordan's swelling streams,
The open heavens diffuse their living beams,—
Beheld the clouds in swift disorder move,
And on his head descend the sacred Dove;—
Heard John in strains of eloquence explain
The swift approach of the Messiah's reign;
His strong suspicions to assurance turn'd,
And all the Devil in his bosom burn'd.
With envy fill'd, he mingled unespied
Among those crowds who wept on Jordan's side
Then he on pinions mounted to survey,
And through the ether cut his pathless way
To God's high temple and the sacred town;
But ere he launch'd, once more, on looking down,
His mighty and much dreaded foe appears;
And while he gaz'd, he almost dropp'd through fears.
But when he heard that voice which silence broke,
(And many say it thunder'd, while it spoke,)
He felt himself with such strange terrors driv'n,
As seiz'd his host when Michael fought in heaven;
From these abodes he takes his sudden flight,
And seeks for refuge in primeval night:

L. 477. *To God's high temple and the sacred town.*] Jerusalem is called the holy city, St. Matt. iv. 5.

So rushing through the clouds the vulture flies,
When at a distance he the quarry spies;
So darts the eagle on the velvet lawn,
So from his talons springs the tender fawn!

"Confus'd and trembling, there obscure he lay,
Nor once emerg'd till night resum'd her sway:
He then arose from the deep gloom he made,
To hide his shame in her unconscious shade;
His livid form with smother'd sulphur crown'd,
His glaring eyeballs blasted all the ground;
His furious soul rekindled all its hate,
And pour'd strange curses on the hand of fate.
Incens'd to madness, he the signal gave,
And call'd his demons from each lonely grave;
An instant council he design'd to form,
To fight in ambush, or assault by storm.
From earth to hell the demons haste away,
Ambitious Belial, lustful Asmoday,
And haughty Moloch, taller than the rest;
Their looks and forms their various ranks express'd.
Each wretch they leave, whom they in triumph led
Through the pale mansions of the silent dead;
All seem'd more dreadful than when first they fell,
And gave new horrors to the glooms of hell.

But most the looks of hell's dread prince surprise,
Nor durst the conclave meet his burning eyes;
None could accost the dreadful tyrant;—none
But crouch'd, and sigh'd, and trembled round his throne.
At length the fiend, that foe of God and man,
Unseal'd his lips, and thus enrag'd began:

" Dishonour'd angels! whither are we led,
" What cursed power has struck our virtue dead?
" Are we so tame, so worthy more than hell,
" We dare no more against our foes rebel?
" Are all your counsels to submit and yield,
" And to a vagrant leave unfought the field?
" On earth's wide coast must Satan's empire fall,
" And Mary's Son possess the spacious ball?
" Oh foul disgrace! forbid it fate, that we
" So long in vain have tasted liberty!
" He can but thunder, and full well we know,
" By past experience, what his bolts can do.
" Shall earth-born man so oft his vengeance dare,
" While made the object of peculiar care;
" And we relent, who have been basely driven
" With peals of thunder from the verge of heaven?

" Will you forget the cause in which you fell,
" And praise the despot in the flames of hell?
" Must I forsake and abdicate my throne,
" And for a monarch this young Saviour own?
" Like you resolve to join the earth-born race,
" Shed tears, and pray, and supplicate for grace?
" Why else is nothing either done or said,
" Worthy yourselves, your empire, or your head?
" Go then, ye cowards, and ignobly fawn,
" And, bound in shackles, lick the despot's throne!"

" Infernal Moloch could no longer bear,
But rose convuls'd with fury and despair.
Such were his looks, and such his furious eyes,
When Heaven in anger hurl'd him from the skies!
' A charge so daring, (he exclaim'd,) 'tis well
' That he who utters reigns enthron'd in hell;
' From any else, one half of this should cost
' More than in heav'n the most exalted lost.
' For our exertions are these legions priz'd
' No more, than basely to be stigmatiz'd
' With feeble penitence? Can that be borne
' In hell, which ev'n the earthly tyrants scorn?
' But words are vain: We, all of us, are true,
' Sworn foes to heaven and earth, and friends to you.

'Such deeds await us as shall spread our fame,
'And hell shall blazon Moloch's glorious name.
'On Jordan's margins, which we lately rov'd
'To aid that cause which we so long have lov'd,
'I then a haughty Pharisee possess'd,
'And lodg'd a darling viper in his breast;
'And while our leader watch'd the doubtful day,
'Belial unseen within another lay.
'We heard the thunder, and the oral sound,
'And saw great Satan mounting from the ground.
'But still we stay'd Christ's secret haunts to know,
'And watch the movements of our deadly foe;
'We saw his footsteps to the desert bend,
'And mark'd the angels who on him attend.
'To his retreats all anxious to pursue,
'We stand prepar'd, and wait commands from you.
'I to destroy him will the forests fire,
'In which, if man, he must in flames expire;
'But if these flames should unsuccessful prove,
'The solid earth shall from its axis move;
'The mighty mass shall to the centre rive,
'And in the gulf entomb him yet alive;
'Or rising whirlwinds rocks and hills displace,
'And dash all Pisgah on his mangled face.'

" He said, and paus'd, nor would for orders stay,
Till Satan rose to interrupt his way.
" To me alone," the gloomy tyrant cries,
" Belongs the glory of this enterprise;
" I go at once to finish the design;
" Mine be the honour, as the danger mine:
" Soon heav'n in mourning hell shall see with joy,
" And take the life of this ill-fated boy."

" Thus having said, the sooty conclave rose,
And to the wild, disguis'd, their leader goes;
Who, on arriving at the forest, found
The Saviour prostrate on the dewy ground;
He, rapt in thought, his spotless prayer preferr'd
Against that onset which the tempter dar'd;
In which we see a bright example given,
That man, when tempted, might apply to Heaven:
Thus to instruct us, and mark out our road,
He ask'd as man what he might take as God.

" Soon did the tempter find his effort fail;
O'er those who pray, he never can prevail!
Yet still he tempted, and his darts preferr'd,
And vainly hop'd to find him off his guard;
Each secret art and stratagem he tries,
False hopes, and joys, and vanities to raise;—

Objects within, and those before his face,—
The solitude and horrors of the place;—
The gloomy darkness, and the gathering storm,—
And lightnings' glare which heaven's fair face deform:
But all his arts the tempter only mock,
Or fall like hail against the solid rock;
Each rude assault unmov'd the Saviour bore,
And kept his mind where it was fix'd before.
Satan at first, of heavenly arms afraid,
Observ'd much caution while the Saviour pray'd;
But when he saw that forty days had pass'd,
In which his lips no food had deign'd to taste,—
When he through lassitude to faint began,
And thus, though God, confess himself a man,
His deadly foe with exultation cried,
"The prize is mine!"—and heaven and earth defied.
"This Son of God shall feel the same disgrace
"That Adam felt—the founder of their race."

"But soon his deep insidious guile repress'd
Those bold designs which first engross'd his breast;
He then resolv'd incognito to try
What secret strength, or wit, or policy,

Against his enemy would best prevail,
Who now with hunger had begun to fail.
To know by proof what these attacks could do,
Some tatter'd garments round himself he threw ;
Lean sallow cheeks entrench'd with care and age,
And eyes grown dim which hastening death presage,
White hairs, pale lips, long beard, and wrinkled face,
And palsied head, his foul deceptions grace.
A rustic staff his shrivell'd hands support,
His trembling feet to crutches had resort ;
With tottering steps he came, and bow'd his head,
And thus, dissembling, to the Saviour said:

" Hail, Son of God, by signs from Heaven approv'd,
" Foretold by prophets, and by God belov'd !
" Full sixty years, through God's amazing grace,
" These trembling feet have trod this hideous place,
" Far from the harden'd unbelieving Jews,
" Who to admit the prophecies refuse.
" Long have I been by revelation warn'd,
" That ere these muscles to the dust return'd,
" These eyes, though dim, should God's Messiah see,
" Who, like old Simeon, I behold in thee.

" When the great Baptist from the desert came
" To Jordan's banks to testify thy fame,
" I from my cell to hear his voice repair'd,
" And with attention all his doctrines heard;
" But fondly thought, ere I forsook my home,
" That mighty prophet—the Messiah—come.
" But soon my heighten'd expectations fell,
" When I perceiv'd he wrought no miracle;
" For this of old the prophet did reveal
" To be Messiah's evidence and seal.
" These signs to thee on Jordan's banks were given
" In oral language, and the Dove from Heaven.
" These various prodigies amidst the crowd
" Having beheld, I should have cried aloud,
" Had not some power, unseen to mortal eyes,
" Brought to this waste the Favourite of the skies.
" Returning thence with anxious hope to see
" Him whom I lov'd, I quickly follow'd thee.
" At length my track by dubious paths was cross'd,
" And I, half starv'd, was in the desert lost.

" The silver moon has form'd her little year,
" And half another, since I wander'd here;

L. 670. *And half another, since I wander'd here.*] Twenty-eight days are a proper lunar month, and twelve more are almost half another.

" Full forty days are now completely past
" Since I presum'd of common food to taste;
" On acorns, leaves, and humble roots, I fed,
" Nor dar'd to ask the luxury of bread.
" With trembling steps I feebly wander'd round
" Each hill and vale, but this unhappy ground: 676
" For this I thought no footsteps dar'd before;
" Within these caves I heard the lions roar.
" Hence I inferr'd, if thou hadst enter'd here,
" To find thee living I must needs despair; 680
" Nor could I hope to flee those darts of fate,
" Which, arm'd with death, here every traveller wait.
" Yet in I crept through this portentous shade,
" Nor aught expected but to find thee dead;
" I then resolv'd thy hapless fate to mourn, 685
" And with warm tears bedew thy rocky urn,
" Thy dear remains within some grave to lay,
" And all due honours to thy ashes pay.
" But since with joy I find my bodings vain,
" Though where no aliment can life sustain;— 690
" Since here no fruits nor wholesome herbs are found
" Above the surface of this blasted ground;

" If thou indeed the great Messiah be,
" Disclose thy power, and save thyself and me;
" For else, our frames and haggard looks confess
" We soon must perish in this wilderness.
" Now let the Godhead in full view appear,
" Nor meanly stay to pine unpitied here.
" Through faith I know, if thou the word should'st say,
" *Be turn'd to bread*,"—these stones would soon obey;
" Thy powerful mandate would these flints transform,
" And to these horrors give another form.
" But though our fathers were with manna fed,
" I, faint with hunger, ask no more than bread;
" Haste then, my Lord, these craving wants supply,
" Or at thy feet I gasp for life—and die."

" The Saviour listen'd; but with piercing eyes
Saw the foul tempter through the saint's disguise.
" Full well," said he, " I know thy black intent,
" And what thy looks and false pretences meant;
" Through all thy turns the serpent's wiles I spy,
" And, free from dread, to thy assaults reply—

" God's holy word forbids all anxious care
" For earthly food—and thus 'tis written there,—

" Man shall not only be sustain'd by bread,
" But by God's promises, as Moses said.
" But though these trees appear as only made
" To shield wild beasts and serpents which they shade,
" Their horrors were for wisest ends design'd,
" Unknown to thee—impervious to mankind.
" If hunger drives, in neighbouring forests grow
" Unnumber'd fruits, and thither thou mayst go:
" Nor will great nature's universal Lord
" Give signs from heaven or miracles afford,
" When he has deign'd these energies to give,
" And still preserves those powers by which we live.
" Yet the first Cause, who all these causes made,
" Could these effects produce without their aid;
" But be it known, his wisdom has denied
" To grant thy wish or gratify thy pride;
" Yet those he succours who on him depend,
" And does the graces of the faithful blend,
" And life confer which shall sustain no end."

" The fiend abash'd, to give his curses vent,
Straight from the Saviour in confusion went.
Against his frauds he found each passage barr'd,
And for assaults by open force prepar'd.

Meanwhile the Son of God no shelter found;
But, cold and hungry, press'd the barren ground.
The skies his canopy, the earth his bed,
And rocks of flint sustain'd his weary head;
The falling dews his only covering form
Amidst the horrors of the gathering storm.
In this abode he sought a short repose,
To ease his soul of agonizing woes;
But his short sleep was mix'd with dismal dreams
Of falling rocks, wild yells, and pitchy streams;
For at his head unseen the tempter lay,
Striving through sleep to lead his soul astray.
But though with sinless fears the man's distrest,
The God that dwelt within repels the rest.
Through these indeed his short-lived slumbers fled,
And left the terrors of the scene display'd.

" Rous'd from the earth, he heard the storm on high,
And infant thunders murmuring round the sky;
These to the forest all their forces led,
And in dread vollies bellow'd o'er his head;
From the dark clouds a dreadful torrent pour'd,
And blasting light'ning every leaf devour'd;

Like Egypt's plagues, the floods and flames conspire
To drown with water and consume with fire;
In dread tornadoes all the furious winds
From their dark caves the enemy unbinds;
These set at large with madness rush'd abroad,
And seas and mountains form'd their destin'd road;
From the four hinges of the world they came,
And in their fury drove the lightning's flame;
On whirling rocks their earliest rage they spent,
And rifted yews beneath their pressure bent:
The earth below which held their roots gave way,
And on the ground vast trunks dismember'd lay;
The distant pines and more contiguous oaks
Suffer'd and groan'd beneath the weighty strokes.
These had preceding hurricanes sustain'd,
And half coeval with the world remain'd.
But these in vain their long prescriptions plead,
Their boasted honours lie among the dead:
Now rock'd by earthquakes, twirl'd and twisted round,
They feel convulsions heave them from the ground;

L. 766. *From the four hinges of the world they came.*] This is Milton's thought, and a very beautiful variation for the four cardinal points.

L. 775. *And half coeval with the world remain'd.*] So it is said of the Hercynian oaks.

The bowstring twang'd to urge the flying dart,
But none could reach or terrify his heart.

" The tempter, foil'd in what his rage design'd,
Flew to new terrors which remain'd behind.
Each beast appear'd which once to Eden came,
And bow'd to Adam to receive its name.
These Satan brought intending to affright
Christ in the mazes of the dreadful night.
Here from the slimy margins of the Nile
Came with slow steps the dreadful crocodile,
Such as the naturalist would deem a prize,
And with him serpents full as large in size.
The false hyena's face was here discern'd,
And in his looks unnatural fierceness burn'd.
Here growling wolves and frightful panthers came,
With hideous forms I have not words to name.

L. 833. *And with him serpents full as large in size.*] Cyrene is a dreadful desert country, to the north-west of Egypt, against the greater Syrtis, now a part of Barca; where, as modern geographers tell us, is a city, to this day, called Corena. It is inhabited by little else than such vast serpents as Europeans can scarcely believe ever were in nature; and so indeed is all Africa,—some of them so big, that eye-witnesses tell us, it is common, when any of those dreadful creatures are killed, to find a whole sheep or calf in their bellies. See Ludolphus of Ethiopia, and Vansleb of Egypt.

Across the rocks the nimble tiger flew,
With howling lions terrible to view.
Here some were found among the brutal race
Which nature bears not on her spacious face.
For hideous forms my tongue forbears to tell,
Were here put on by imps which came from hell.
Sometimes these beasts, by nature fierce and wild,
Gaz'd on our Lord, and look'd serenely mild.
Yet through their hearts the fiends diffuse new power
To seize their foe, and urge them to devour.

" These brutal forms the grand arch traitor led,
And like a leopard darted at his head.
But when enrag'd he found the powers of hell
Too weak to storm this holy citadel,
He howl'd in all the anguish of despair,
And, cloth'd in flames, vanish'd in liquid air.

" But since nor storms, nor shrieks, nor beasts, nor night,
Nor those dread forms which guilty man affright,
Could move the Saviour,—spectres now invade,
And pale and ghastly flit along the shade.
With flaming torches here and flambeaus high,
A corpse moves slowly at a distance by.

The shrieking ghosts, which crowd around the bier,
Full in his face with fiery eyeballs stare,
With looks derang'd and hair distain'd with blood,
In which, alive, their hands had been embrued:
These as they pass groan out a piercing sigh,
Weep tears of blood and fade before the eye;
Or urg'd by fiends whom dismal forms invest,
New barb their darts and point them at his breast.
But though their numbers, rage, and yells increase,
He sits unmov'd in calm and sinless peace.

"The night at length began to wear away,
The ghosts retir'd before approaching day,
The beams of light array'd the golden east,
And sullen darkness travell'd to the west:
When, ere the sun unveil'd his cheerful face,
Christ bade farewell to this unholy place.
He, cold and hungry, to a hillock goes,
To catch those beams which free from clouds arose;—
To turn his thought on the preceding storm,—
His robes to dry, and frozen limbs to warm.
'Twas here the tempter his design renew'd,
And the same end by different means pursued.

L. 869. *He sits unmov'd in calm and sinless peace.*] A verse of Milton's.

Array'd in garments of becoming light,
Unlike the horrors of the recent night,
He bade him welcome on the bended knee,
With all the arts of false humility,
From those strange conflicts he had lately pass'd,
When in the darkness they encounter'd last.
But having found each past disguise well known,
He thought it best his character to own;
Yet lodge his malice in pretences fair,
And, with intrigue, what force had lost, repair.
Hence, with compassions which his soul abhorr'd,
And daring pity, he address'd our Lord.

" Though men have been instructed to upbraid
" And call us foes—we sometimes give them aid.
" Important truths our oracles decide,
" And millions bow to this unerring guide;
" We to the rich present the golden ore,
" And spread our tables for the weak and poor;
" We kill those scruples which would murder mirth,
" And for the palate give inventions birth.
" Yet for these deeds we stand condemn'd to bear
" The crimes of men, in which we scarcely share.
" If then for these, ungrateful as they are,
" We watch all anxious, and such gifts prepare,

" How much on thee must every heart bestow
" To meet thy wants and cancel what we owe!
" Nor can we fear thou wilt unthankful prove,
" And with ingratitude requite our love!
" Full well I know thee, though the Son of God,
" Both cold and hungry in this wild abode;
" And though thy wisdom or thy power denied
" The poor old hermit who for bread applied,
" My gifts, unask'd, thine eyes shall quickly see,
" In rich profusion kept in store for thee."

" Thus having said, there instantly arose
Scenes, such as would an Eden recompose:
The sturdy oak, the all-enlivening pine,
The stately cedar form'd for work divine;
The shady chesnut, and the walnut fair,
And fragrant Lotus, spread their branches there:—
The virtuous palm, which does by pressure rise,
And lift its head towards the bending skies;
The lovely cherry reddening with a blush,
The golden quince which hung from every bush;
The silken peach with noble flavour bless'd,
The plumb whose name Armenian fields confess'd;
The juicy mulberry, which, fables feign,
From blood of lovers drew its purple stain:

On every side the mantling vineyard spread,
And pendent grapes hung clustering round his head.
Unnumber'd flow'rs to entertain the guest
Rose from the ground to decorate the feast.
These humbly creep to deck the arbour's side,
Those mount on high and glow with native pride;
And with such art were all with fruit combin'd,
That the same hand might flowers and clusters find.

" Not far from these, all open to the view,
In spicy groves the golden orange grew:
The silver lemon next, and next to these
The rich pomegranate from beyond the seas;
This was at first from Punic Carthage brought,
But bore a part in what the tempter wrought.
Beneath their feet a carpet chiefly green
Show'd nature's nice embroidery between:
While every hue so exquisitely grew,
As if the landscape art and nature drew.
Around the arbour in large tufts arose
The valley's lily and sweet Sharon's rose,
The jasmine, camphire, nard, each fragrant sweet,
Which in the spouse's garden are presum'd to meet.
While mossy benches, which might monarchs please,
Spread their soft laps as if to promise ease.

" Full in the midst a costly table stood,
Laden with fruit and every kind of food.
The middle part a forest boar sustain'd,
And costly dishes cover'd what remain'd,
Such as the taste, and smell, and eyes invite,
With various show and order exquisite.
From air and ocean much provisions came,—
From earth those dainties most renown'd in name.
The waters furnish'd every fish that dwells
In seas or rivers, arm'd with scales or shells.
To crown the rest, and gratify the taste,
Rich sparkling wines a spacious side-board grac'd,
In crystal vases dang'rous to behold,
Or massy goblets form'd of Ophir's gold.
Attendant youths and lovely virgins wait
To serve the Saviour in the pomp of state:
Their ambient hair in careless ringlets flow'd,
And in their faces youthful vigour glow'd.
Some hold a charger where pomegranates shine,
And some sustain a flask of generous wine.
All, deck'd with smiles, their offices enjoy'd,
And seem'd to wish they could be more employ'd.
Seated apart, in flowing robes array'd,
Two lovely nymphs their charms with art display'd;

Their snares the snares of mortals far excel—
Lovely as ever tempted man to hell!
Delicious poison darted from their eyes,
But he who drinks inevitably dies.
Enchanting sorc'ries dwelt upon each tongue,
While thus to warbling lutes harmoniously they sung.

THE SONG.

"Say, what songs shall we prepare
For both worlds' immortal Heir?
How our joy, our love express,
In this barren wilderness?

"Honey from thy feet did flow,
O'er thy head fair arbours grow,
At thy sight fierce beasts grew mild,
And the barren desert smil'd.

"Welcome, welcome, welcome thrice
To this happy paradise.
Here no serpent needst thou fear,
No forbidden fruit is here.

"Hark! the amorous turtles call!
Hark! the silver waters fall!
And a gentle spicy breeze
Whispers through the rustling trees.

" These, the rugged tempests o'er,
Storms and whirlwinds heard no more,
These the Hero all invite
To soft love and gay delight.
" Safe and friendly all appears;
We thy gentle ministers!
We this food before thee plac'd,
Condescend to sit and taste!"

" Thus sung the syrens, but they sung in vain,
Nor gain'd one purpose to reward their pain.
Their keenly barb'd and well directed dart
Assail'd his ears, but could not reach his heart.
No dang'rous softness crept unguarded in
To lodge the embryo of a growing sin;
Nor though the tempter his design pursues,
And his entreaties earnestly renews,
Could he prevail upon our suffering Lord
To taste or languish for the food prepar'd.

" Alike," said Christ, " I scorn thy gifts and thee,
" Thy hateful malice and thy flattery.
" Were those the friendships of thy recent boast,
" Shown the last night when angry tempests toss'd?
" Thy acts of kindness to this world below
" Conduct thy children to eternal woe.

" Thy boasted oracles, in fair disguise,
" Are only demons speaking doubtful lies.
" That food before me which thy vassals eat,
" Is but a vision and a specious cheat,—
" But fancied viands of delusive air,
" And those who taste will find them bitter fare.
" Nor can thy power with all its pomp and state
" A single atom of the dust create.
" Vain are those phantoms which deceive the sight,
" As were the recent horrors of the night.
" My soul unmov'd, from thy enchantments free,
" Scorns to submit or take an alms from thee.
" I know thy snares, thy bold intrigues espy,
" And all thy powers and stratagems defy."

" At these reproofs the tempter's visage turn'd,
And all his breast with indignation burn'd.
" If all (he said) the favours I present
" Must be perverted from the ends I meant;—
" If mean suspicions haunt thy jealous breast,
" And evil thoughts forbid thy soul to rest;

L. 1031. *A single atom of the dust create.*] Proper creation can be alone the act of infinite power. No wonder therefore that we cannot comprehend it, unless we were ourselves infinite.

In ancient days 'twas Kirjath-sephir nam'd,
For valiant Othniel's dear-bought conquest fam'd;
Empire and love the victor's views divide;
He humbled first the Canaanitish pride,
Then won the charming Achsah for his bride.

"Soon as the people this strange flight discern'd,
Their wondering thoughts to consternation turn'd.
A learn'd astronomer the monster show'd,
Where o'er the town he mark'd his airy road.
Men, matrons, maids, and children, run to see
What all esteem'd an unknown prodigy.
But in some moments the strange sight was gone,
And Satan flew by Ziph and Jeshimon.
On leaving Hebron to the left, they stray,
And soon discern'd where ancient Gaza lay;
Where Ashdod, Askelon, and Ekron stood,
And Gerar fair and Bezor's little flood;

L. 1085. *For valiant Othniel's dear-bought conquest fam'd.*] This Debir, which signifies an oratory, called also Kirjath-Sepher, or the city of a book, is thought to have been a Canaanitish University. It is situated in the tribe of Judah, south of Hebron, not far from the plain of Mamre. For the history of its conquest by Othniel, see Jud. i. 12, 13.

Through all Philistia was the fiend obey'd,
And on his altars rites abhorr'd were paid.
O'er Libnah's walls from hence the dragon sail'd,
Leaving strong Lachish where Sennacherib fail'd;
Then by Tekoah's forests bent his course,
And flew o'er Bethlehem with impetuous force;
Thence passing Saveh with an easy flight,
Imperial Salem first appear'd in sight.
Here he survey'd its utmost southern bound,
By sacred Zion's beauteous turrets crown'd,
Where Millo rises by Siloam's wave,
Whose solid walls its peaceful waters lave:

L. 1102. *And on his altars rites abhorr'd were paid.*] See 2 Kings, i. 2. &c. where we read of the oracle of Baal-zebub, the God of Ekron; the same, undoubtedly, with Beelzebub in the New Testament.

L. 1104. *Leaving streng Lachish where Sennacherib fail'd.*] This city was besieged by Sennacherib; but we do not read that he took it; nay, it is said that he departed from it, 2 Kings, xix. 8, and it was one of the last which held out against Nebuchadnezzar, Jer. xxxiv. 7.

L. 1107. *Thence passing Saveh with an easy flight.*] This valley of Saveh, or Shaveh, is a little south of Jerusalem: it is mentioned twice, and, I think, no more, in the Holy Scriptures; once by its proper name, Gen. xiv. 17. as the place where the king of Sodom met Abraham, and Melchisedech came forth and gave him bread and wine; and a second time, only by a periphrasis called the King's Dale, 2 Sam. xviii. 18. as it is also in the former place.

L. 1111. *Where Millo rises by Siloam's wave.*] Millo,

These thence descending into Kidron pour,
Where David's son erected Ophel's tower.
To curse the town the rebel scarcely stay'd,
Ere he the Saviour of the world convey'd
To Israel's temple; set apart to share
Their faith, repentance, sacrifice, and prayer.
Thence looking down, on Herod's tower he fell,
And lodg'd him on the highest pinnacle.

which signifies a filling, because built in the void space between Sion and Jerusalem, was begun by King David, 2 Sam. v. 9. and finished under Solomon, Jeroboam being overseer of the work, 1 Kings, xi. 27, &c.

L. 1114. *Where David's son erected Ophel's tower.*] Solomon had three palaces or houses in Jerusalem: the first, the house of the forest of Lebanon, 1 Kings vii. 2. like our St. James's: the second, the house of Pharaoh's daughter, 1 Kings, vii. 8. and the third, his own dwelling house, which was thirteen years in building, 1 Kings, vii. 1. which last is generally placed, in the Maps of Jerusalem, near the banks of Siloam, opposite to Millo. The tower of Ophel is placed a little easterly of this palace, near the fall of Siloam into Kidron

L. 1119. *Thence looking down, on Herod's tower he fell.*] The old tower in Solomon's temple was of the nature of a porch, and very magnificent, as it is described, 1 Kings, vi. 3. and 2 Chron. iii. 4. from both which passages we learn, that it was twenty cubits long, ten broad, and a hundred and twenty high (sacred cubits); and consequently, the temple itself reaching but to thirty cubits, this must be four times the height of it; and Herod's was not inferior.

Here still afloat and fluttering by his side,
He thus accosts him with insulting pride :

" There, if thou canst, I destine thee to stand,
" To view the city now at thy command.
" But if thou wouldst the Son of God be hail'd,
" Which much I question, having so prevail'd
" On thy weak body ;—just below thee see
" Crowds who forsake their prayers to look at thee.
" Thee from yon court the vested priests perceive,
" And half their sacrifice unfinish'd leave ;
" While from the next, with lifted eyes and hands,
" In wild amazement Israel gazing stands.
" In the third court, thick kneeling at the gate,
" With equal wonder see the Gentiles wait ;
" They leave their victims struck with holy fear,
" And think they see some God or hero here.

L. 1129. *Thee from yon court the vested priests perceive.*] The altar whereon the sacrifices were offered, was not within the covered part of the temple (for what should they have done there with the smoke of so vast a number of sacrifices), but *sub dio*, in the open air, in a court ; incense only being offered within the temple. Into this court the priests only came ; as into the second, none but Jews with their sacrifices ; whence they were taken in by the Priests. The third was the outward court, or that of the Gentiles.

" If thou wouldst set thy injur'd nation free,
" As Judas did—the valiant Maccabee,
" The time is come thy wishes to fulfil ;
" Thy people groan, and fate awaits thy will:
" Let them no more these marks of bondage bear;
" Go drive yon eagle proudly perching there;
" Display thy power on all who would oppose,
" And with thy thundering arm transfix thy foes.

" This fair occasion courts to mighty things,
" Worthy of thee and thy long race of kings.
" See on the right a most attractive prize,
" Antonia's tower devoid of soldiers lies.
" The Roman youth, regardless now of war,
" Sport in great Herod's amphitheatre ;
" Or else, by Zion's tempting beauties won,
" Resign their arms, and own themselves undone.
" Thus interest, honour, call thee to the field,
" And shew the spot where vanquish'd Rome must yield.
" If then the sense of injur'd virtue warms,
" If incense pleases, or ambition charms,
" If fir'd by glory thou wouldst e'er fulfil
" Thy sov'reign pleasure—the Almighty's will,—

" That will which ratified the stern decree
" That men and angels should submit to thee,—
" Plunge in the sight of the admiring town,
" Or in the altar's flame move gently down.
" So shall mankind becoming honours bring,
" And men and angels hail their God and king.
" Nor canst thou deem, if Lord of earth and skies,
" What I propose a daring enterprise ;
" Since David's harp thy preservation sung,
" When with these notes the spacious temple rung :

PSALM XCI.

" Bless'd is the man whose sure defence
Is faith and heav'nly confidence !
Thrice bless'd who, compass'd round with hosts of foes,
Can on the everlasting arms repose !
Nor will that God whom thou thy hope dost make
Refuse to hear thy gasping cry ;
Nor will he helpless let thee die ;
Nor will he thy defenceless state forsake !
See with what haste celestial guards above
At his command fly circling round,
And make thy dwelling sacred ground!

" See with what haste they to thy succour move!
With what officious embassies of love !
These above, soft hovering o'er,
These behind and these before,
Thou canst not ask for more !

And near to Adam's and Zaretan's town
On Pisgah's top he set the Saviour down.

" This sacred mount, as well the tempter knew,
Some ages past Jehovah chose, to shew
To favour'd Moses Canaan's land, which spread
On each side Jordan to its fountain-head.
'Twas here, conceal'd, the sly seducer learn'd
How distant objects were with ease discern'd.
To this he added what experience taught,
And a false optic to the Saviour brought.
His magic arts delusive scenes prepare
Of well wrought figures form'd of pliant air.
With living colours he adorn'd the whole,
And spread enchantments to ensnare his soul.
Towns, cities, kingdoms, bird, and beast, and man,
Arrang'd in order, Satan thus began:

" With safety guided by my skill and care
" O'er hills, and vales, and plains, and fields of air,
" Here will we rest and fix our short abode
" To view those works which men ascribe to God.

ful, because geographers cannot agree on which side of Jordan to place it.

L. 1228. *On each side Jordan to its fountain-head.*] See Deut. xxxiv. 1, 2. All the land of Gilead unto Dan, all Naphthali, Ephraim, Manasseh and Judah.

" Whate'er thou seest, romantic, good, or fair,
" Which ocean's shores and earth's wide surface bear,
" From east to west both lands and seas are mine,
" And 'tis my purpose to confirm them thine.
" That barren plain which hesitates to boast,
" And lies southwest, is vast Arabia's coast.
" Those beasts and men that travel on the sand
" Are richly laden from a foreign land
" With precious cargoes, spice, and golden ore,
" Which through these deserts reach a distant shore.
" In this warm clime the sons of Ishmael stray,
" And piles of wealth to Persia's Gulf convey;
" Whence they these treasures of the world disperse
" Through various mediums round the universe.
" Still further south vast Lubim's deserts rise,
" Whose distant borders seem to touch the skies:
" To golden sands they give perfection birth,—
" Their lands the people think the best on earth.

L. 1253. *In this warm clime the sons of Ishmael stray.*] The Ishmaelites were some of the first land merchants, as the Phœnicians the first by sea. See Gen. xxxvii. 25.

L. 1254. *And piles of wealth to Persia's gulf convey.*] By this way all rich Persian silks, &c. were formerly carried over land, till a passage was found out by sea.

L. 1259. *To golden sands they give perfection birth,*] The

" But nothing here can charm thee or delight,
" Or recompense us for so bold a flight.

" From these wide worlds which Lubim's desert boasts
" Of unknown realms and unfrequented coasts,
" The eye retires some countries to explore,
" Which offer gold and give us something more.
" Behold that sea,—due west direct thine eye,
" Where lovely islands in its bosom lie :
" Crete, Cyprus, Rhodes, the clusters which we see,
" Delude mankind, but have no charms for thee!
" To thy vast soul these sordid spots are mean,
" And must be lost, or notic'd with disdain.
" Not fair Trinacria can afford delight,
" Nor are its gardens scarcely worth thy sight.
" Due north from hence behold that lovely plain,
" Wash'd by the surges of the restless main,

finest dust-gold being brought from the coasts of Africa; and several regions in it taking their very names from spices, as Myrrhifera, Cinnamomifera.

L. 1260. *Their lands the people think the best on earth.*] The Abyssinians will not be persuaded but that the old Paradise was seated in their country; and there have been European authors who have reckoned it under the line.

L. 1276. *Washed by the surges of the restless main.*] The upper and lower seas, as they sometimes call them; the

" Which barren mountains in the midst divide,
" And leave a portion near the swelling tide.
" Rais'd on its breast not far within the land,
" Dost thou not see a royal city stand;
" On seven ascents its gilded turrets shine,
" As if erected by a hand like mine;
" And near that stream, ascending over all,
" On that steep rock behold the capitol:
" That spot is Rome, the mistress of the world,
" Which from their thrones has mighty monarchs hurl'd,
" The queen of nations justly styled! yet she,
" At my command, shall bow her neck to thee;
" Her trembling senators thy sway shall own,
" And, cloth'd in purple, raise thee to her throne.

" Or wouldst thou aim at more exalted praise,
" And for thyself a mightier empire raise,

Adriatic to the north, and the Sicilian, Sardinian, &c. to the south.

L. 1277. *Which barren mountains in the midst divide.*] The Apennines, which run longways through the greater part of Italy.

L. 1290. *And, cloth'd in purple, raise thee to her throne.*] The royal Insignia were of this colour with the Romans; and it was therefore treason for any to affect it besides the emperor.

" A tour with me beyond these mountains go,
" Whose horrid summits bear incessant snow;
" And see a plain extended at our feet,
" Where power and glory may rejoicing meet.
" It stretches where Garumna's waters creep,
" And where the Rhine runs foaming to the deep
" Wash'd by the British and Ligustick seas;
" And for its ramparts claims the Pyrenees.
" The hardy natives all their neighbours call
" The people of the fam'd Transalpine Gaul;
" Bold, active, hardy, curious, daring, brave,
" Proud to be free whilst others they enslave.
" Yet all these tribes thou mays't with honour gain,
" And crown'd with glory in Lutetia reign.

L. 1294. *Whose horrid summits bear incessant snow.*] The Alps, where snow is said to lie unmelted in some places all the year round.

L. 1297. *It stretches where Garumna's waters creep.*] Garumna, now the Garonne in Aquitaine; it rises not far from Toulouse and Montpelier, whence running across the country, it falls, by Bourdeaux, into our ocean.

L. 1303. *Bold, active, hardy, curious, daring, brave.*] This character Cæsar gave them; and a great part of Europe has found to its sorrow, that they still retain many of their ancient characteristics.

L. 1305. *Yet all these tribes thou mays't with honour gain.*] They were formerly divided into as many small Septs or Cantons as England or Ireland; as the Atrebatii, the Celtæ, Venetii, and twenty others.

" Then do not pause; thy choice may come too late;
" For if I rightly scan the rolls of fate,
" In future days a haughty prince shall rise,
" And in thy name thy doubtful laws despise.
" If thou refuse, he shall accept my aid,
" Usurp thy power, and all thy rights invade:
" Nor will his pride my arts and arms disdain;
" By these assisted, he by these shall reign:
" In spite of thee, though distant lands rebel,
" Shall reign on earth, then sit enthron'd in hell.

" If thou wouldst choose a less luxuriant soil,
" In yonder sea behold fair Britain's isle;
" Whose rocky points the rolling waves divide,
" Whose beauteous rivers through her forests glide.
" The old Phœnicians knew this wealthy place,
" And robb'd, or traded with, her hardy race.

L. 1310. *And in thy name thy doubtful laws despise.*] The Most Christian King.

L. 1319. *Whose rocky points the rolling waves divide.*] The three capes or angles of Britain (whence some derive the name of Anglia); the north foreland, the land's end, and Caithness; the same, if I mistake not, with the Cantium, Bolerium, and Orcas or Tarvidum, of the ancients.

L. 1321. *The old Phœnicians knew this wealthy place.*] Strabo tells us of a Phœnician master of a ship, who traded with Britain; that he ran his vessel on the rocks, when in

" They seem for virtue and adventures made,
" Peace but their recreation, war their trade ;
" They, born for freedom, servile chains refuse,
" And boldly death without this blessing chuse.
" Force cannot bend them ; but persuasions move,
" And kindness melts their stubborn souls to love.
" If once they fix, they cannot be subdued,
" But wade through fire, or rivers fill'd with blood.
" This thoughtful tribe thy eloquence may charm,
" And with just views of thy ambition warm,
" Their manners polish, and their gold refine,
" And fill their souls with virtues such as thine :—
" Bid through their means discordant tumults cease,
" And raise the standard of eternal peace.

" Or if thou wilt by bold coercion sway,
" And make thy word the law they shall obey,
" Aided by me thou shalt the sceptre gain,
" And like a tyrant absolutely reign.
" But ere their hearts of steel can be subdued,
" The coasts of Albion must be dyed with blood.
" Shouldst thou desire their firm resolves to know,
" This glass will facts in retrospection show.

danger of being taken by the Romans ; so careful were the Phœnicians to conceal from other nations their commercial *intercourse* with Britain.

" On Gallia's shores behold what myriads bear
" With horrid front the instruments of war;
" See horse and foot in dusky squadrons run,
" And shields and halberts glitter to the sun.
" Androgeus exil'd from his native throne,
" Presents the cause which Cæsar makes his own.
" See how they charge, retreat, and charge again;
" See weighty cataphracts and iron men:
" Pikes, javelins, swords, reflect the waving light,
" And cross the channel to commence the fight,
" The Morine seas they cut with sail or oar,
" And reach with trouble the Rutupian shore.
" Near Dubris' point they blacken all the strand,
" A thousand chariots plough the yielding sand;
" Ten thousand warriors lift the weighty spear,
" And darts and swords and battle-axes rear;
" With hideous shouts they pierce the rending skies,
" And march to grapple with their enemies.

L. 1349. *Androgeus exil'd from his native throne.*] Some call him Androgeus, others Mandubracius, a British Prince, who fled to Cæsar for succour, and assisted him against Cassibelan and his native country.

L. 1355. *The Morine seas they cut with sail and oar.*] So the strait was called between England and France.

L. 1356. *And reach with trouble the Rutupian shore.*] The Rutupium of the ancients, is supposed to have been the same with our Richborough.

" That silver steed which proudly trots around,
" And paws the sand, and beats the echoing ground,—
" Which moves in state—its rider's glories shares,—
" The brave, the great Cassibelan it bears.
" Discordant interests he together ties,
" And nations arm'd are his unfeign'd allies.
" Though Rome's commanders all the world esteem,
" None can contrive, intrigue, and act like him;
" He ends with honour what he undertakes,
" And advantageous past misfortunes makes;
" Cool, brave, wise, generous, all mankind allow,
" And, but his own, each tongue declares him so.
" These hosts and heroes wait at thy commands,
" If thou but ask them at my generous hands.

" Thus have I offer'd all the world can boast
" Of wealth or glory on the western coast.
" But small those portions which appear reveal'd,
" Compar'd with treasures India holds conceal'd.
" In moving thither where these riches lie,
" Renown'd Damascus courts thy wandering eye,

L. 1366. *The brave, the great Cassibelan it bears.*] Cassibelan was Generalissimo of all the British forces.

L. 1382. *Renown'd Damascus courts thy wandering eye.*]

" For earthly monarchs an enchanting prize,
" A modern rival of old Paradise.
" But this I know thy nobler views disdain,
" And all these charms are spread for thee in vain.
" Nor will I stay thee by Euphrates' side,
" Though Rome's ambition and the Parthian pride
" This moment meet to reconcile their wrongs,
" And blunt their daggers with their friendly tongues,
" On yonder isle, where haughty Herod stays
" To join the congress and confirm the peace.
" Nor shall our eyes in these wide regions stray,
" Where mighty Indus hastens to the sea:

Dammesek, or Damascus, or Damas, (for by all those names it is called, besides Chams by the Arabians) is described by all that have seen it as an earthly Paradise. The Arabians fancy the sun has a more benign influence on this town than any other, whence the name they give it. Satan calls it rival of old Paradise; and so a good friend of his once thought it; I mean Mahomet; who was so afraid of being bewitched and softened by the pleasures thereof, and rendered unfit for the great projects he had in his head, that he refused to enter it when very near it: such was his hypocrisy!

L. 1388. *Though Rome's ambition and the Parthian pride.*] See Joseph. Antiq. lib. 8. cap. 5. where you have the entertaining relation of this royal congress between Vitellius, Herod the Tetrarch, and Artaban king of Parthia, in a small isle of the Euphrates.

" Here Alexander his proud flag unfurl'd
" In dreary deserts to subdue the world.

" Look farther on, beyond that eastern bound,
" Where man imagines no more land is found.
" There fields, and cities, groves, and rivers fair,
" Disclose a country which deserves thy care.
" No records yet its future name have shown,
" To Rome and Greece it stands alike unknown;
" Unborn historians shall preserve its fame,
" And tell mankind that China is its name.
" In this new world unnumber'd millions swarm,
" To peace devoted and averse to harm.

" That stream which laves the grand pagoda's walls,
" And thence in two divided portions falls;—
" That bridge stupendous which sublimely stands;—
" That wall which stretches into distant lands,
" Unconquer'd Magog's wand'rers to restrain,
" Whose bold irruptions prove it built in vain;—

L. 1402. *To Rome and Greece it stands alike unknown.*] That the Romans had no knowledge of this country, I think, all grant; and our modern geographers believe that Ptolemy knew it little better; for though he talks of Sinarum regio, yet by his description it should be rather Siam than China.

L. 1411. *Unconquer'd Magog's wand'rers to restrain.*] The Scythians, or Tartars, bridled by the wall of China.

" These works prodigious, and superb design,
" Are human efforts, though they seem divine.
" A prince at present fills this mighty throne
" With views of empire placid as thine own;
" But could he thy superior virtues see,
" His humbled soul would yield the crown to thee,
" With calm submission own thy sovereign sway,
" And feel less joy to govern than obey.

" But though these realms bestow a boundless store,
" Another prospect will present thee more.
" Another world, and worlds of treasure, sleep
" Beyond the confines of the western deep:
" The fairest country which the sun surveys,
" Or deigns to visit with his genial rays.
" Its vast extent engrosses every zone,
" And calls the beauties of the world its own:
" To learn the path, behold that northern waste,
" And watch those crowds that through the desert haste;

L. 1415. *A prince at present fills this mighty throne.*] As Augustus reign'd at Rome, and the temple of Janus was shut, when our Saviour was born; so it is remarkable, that in China all things were quiet, and the emperor changed his own name for another that signifies pacific.

" See that small strait with timbers cover'd o'er,
" See how they swarm to reach the happy shore!
" See with what safety they forsake the strand,
" Cross the wild gut, and reach their destin'd land!
" Were both compar'd, thy justice must confess,
" Canaan to this is but a wilderness.
" In this wide region reigns eternal spring,
" And smiling summer hovers on the wing.
" Here beauties bloom to human eyes unseen,
" The flowers are fresh, the trees are ever green:
" Delicious fruits the fragrant boughs support,
" And nature seems to vegetate in sport.
" Creation smiles! birds, beasts, and insects play,
" And dance refulgent in the beams of day.
" The tract so boundless and the scene so vast,
" That crowds of empires are absorb'd and lost.

" 'Twas for thy sake I sent those myriads o'er,
" Who lately press'd the continental shore;
" To thee this world of glory to convey,
" Where thou shalt hold an undisputed sway:
" This promis'd land without reward I give,
" Where all the millions of the earth may live.

L. 1431. *See that small strait with timbers cover'd o'er.*] The straits of Anian.

" And all the tribute which my lips demand
" For this dominion over sea and land,—
" For rights conferr'd, for favours freely lent,
" Is only honour and acknowledgment.
" Nor canst thou doubt my title to bestow
" Those varied blessings I presume to show:
" Prince of the air thy Father Satan made,
" And storms and spirits have my voice obey'd;
" God of this world by Deity I'm styl'd,
" And like a God am placable and mild.
" Yet this is all that for the globe I ask,
" Which those who love me own an easy task.
" Take then these worlds, and raise thy mighty throne,
" And be a rival to thyself alone.
" This, only this, shall the condition be,
" Accept the blessing on thy bended knee."

" Thus far the Saviour the temptation bore,
But would not hear the black blasphemer more.
Some sacred rays of light celestial shone,
Which Satan felt, and heav'd an inward groan.
Before their force the bold enchantment broke;
But ere they parted, thus the Saviour spoke:

" Long have I borne thy insolence of power,
" Diversely shewn while waiting to devour—
" With patience borne the arrogance and wrong
" Which thou hast dropp'd from thy blaspheming tongue—
" Heard all thy falsehoods—trac'd each vain pretence,
" And now command thee—*Disappear from hence.*
" The sacred writings, which our rule we make,
" Restrict that worship thou hast aim'd to take,
" And in plain language name the Sov'reign Lord
" To be alone in heaven and earth ador'd:
" And those who love him must his word observe,
" Since him alone must every creature serve.
" Know then, that God, who scorns thy proud disdain,
" Condemns blasphemers to eternal pain."

" Convuls'd with rage the prince of darkness fell,
And felt on earth the agonies of hell;
Nor could his soul these keen repulses bear,
His short-liv'd world dissolv'd in liquid air.
In horrid sounds he gave some curses vent,
And with his howlings shook the firmament:
Then to the desert hasten'd to retire,
Borne on a dusky cloud of sulphur, smoke, and fire.

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OF THE

FOURTH BOOK.

OUR Saviour having now foiled the enemy, the angels, who had all the time hovered over and been spectators of the combat, descend with a banquet, and sing a song of triumph on his victory; which ended, they attend him back to Jordan. The Baptist's further testimony concerning him. Our Lord, departing thence, enters on his ministerial office; and, ascending the Mount of the Beatitudes, chooses his twelve apostles, and then preaches that celebrated sermon, containing the chief heads of religion. This he begins with an inquiry after happiness: after which he gives the substance of the Ten Commandments; assuring his auditors that he came not to destroy, but to fulfil them; and instructs in almsgiving, fasting, prayer, and other duties, giving them a particular form to assist their devotion; and concludes his discourse with a lively parable of two houses, one built on the rock, the other on the sand. The sermon finished, our Lord descends from the mountain, and preaches in Galilee; working his first miracle at Cana; and at Naim, not far from it, restoring the

Widow's Son to life. In the meanwhile the Baptist continued preaching repentance, and acquiring great veneration among the people, and even from Herod himself, at that time Tetrarch of Galilee; who reforms from all his outward vices, except his unlawful love to Herodias. Herod's criminal familiarity with her becomes public; which John the Baptist hearing of, he comes to court, and boldly reproves the king: at which Herodias being enraged, she gets him imprisoned in Macherus, and some time after beheaded; he having first prophesied of the invasion of Galilee, and the discomfiture of Herod's army; which soon after came to pass. Aretas, the King of Arabia, being enraged at the injury done to his daughter, whom Herod had formerly married, enters his country with an army, which Herod prepares to encounter; but his forces forsake him, and he loses the day. On this our Saviour retires, with his disciples, into the deserts of Bethsaida.

THE

LIFE

OF

CHRIST.

BOOK IV.

"THE conscious seaman, when the tempest blows,
Feels all the horrors of surrounding woes;
But when some harbour shields him from the blast,
He grows forgetful of the dangers past:
He sees the surges, when the storm is o'er,
Subside in peace, and kiss the broken shore.
The tranquil world his eyes with joy behold,
While hills and forests flame with heavenly gold;
The face of nature looks serenely fair,
Nor storms nor vapours agitate the air;
The warring elements repose in peace,
And all the remnants of their discord cease;
Earth, air, and seas, assume a diff'rent dress,
And, cloth'd in smiles, their gratitude express.

" Hail, Son of God, announc'd, confess'd, approv'd;
" Saviour of man, and head of angels, hail!
" Thee thus ador'd we sing; thus cast our crowns
" With trembling awe at thy triumphant feet.
" Before these worlds, thou from the mount of God,
" When Lucifer had half dispeopled heaven,
" Led'st forth th' embattled seraphim to fight:
" Then, at the head of his rebellious war,
" Didst seize th' arch-traitor, all his bands dispers,
" And crush them underneath thy flaming wheels.
" We saw them from the battlements of heaven
" Tumbled abruptly down; and chaos wide,
" Struck with a dreadful flash of unknown light,
" Shrink back his sooty waves, and inward roll
" To find a new abyss; till wheeling down,
" Like falling stars, these exil'd sons of heaven

L. 61. *Hail, Son of God, announc'd, confess'd, approv'd.*] I was so well pleased with the song of the angels in Milton, on the same occasion, that I had a desire to try what I could do in that sort of verse; though I have but one precedent for introducing blank verse into a Poem composed of Rhimes, and that is in the Essay upon Translations, written by a person of quality in our own language: how I have succeeded in it, must be left to the reader.

" On its black bosom hiss'd, thick sprinkled o'er
" With scatter'd drops of hot sulphureous flame.

" Thy foes confin'd, Thou, O Eternal Word,
" Didst will creation from the dreary void,
" High hills, rich dales, sweet springs, sea, earth, and sky,
" And those ethereal lamps which flame above
" To light the Lord of the creation, Man,
" The last and best display of power divine.
" His godlike form thou didst with soul inspire,
" Fitted to know and love thee; and, design'd
" To fill those seats th' apostate spirits lost,
" Didst place him in a paradise below.
" The fiend in the prophetic glass beheld;
" And gnash'd his teeth with rage and rancour fell,
" That earth-born man should rule so fair a world;
" Then struggling hard, burst from confinement free,
" And rose through chaos and the frighted deep,
" Bent on an expedition to explore
" His rival's force, then grapple and subdue,
" And captive drag him to eternal night.
" His fatal guile prevail'd; nor could weak man
" The woman and the fiend, when leagued, resist.

" He ate; he fell; the whole creation groan'd,
" And sympathiz'd in their lost master's fate.
" We sighing saw the ruins of the world:
" So wide the breach we knew no remedy;
" Nor could our wisdom any means invent
" To expiate thy injur'd Father's wrath,
" Punish the rebel, and lost man restore.
" Then in the council of th' Eternal Three,
" Thou didst stand forth and seize the mighty task,
" The weight of Heavenly vengeance deign to bear,
" Which feeble mortals would have crush'd to hell.
" The old red dragon met, O spotless Lamb,
" By thy unequal arms is doom'd to fall,
" Though thou no thunder in the fight wilt use,
" Nor aught but innocence and virtue pure.
" Thou, the chaste woman's Seed, of virgin born,
" The mighty serpent's vainly threatening head
" Shalt crush beyond retrieve; while, full of rage,
" From his wide mouth, that open sepulchre,
" In horrid streams the yellow venom flows.
" In folds voluminous outstretch'd he lies,
" The wonder and the burden of the earth.
" Hell's principality thou shalt destroy,

L. 121. *Hell's principality thou shalt destroy.*] So Mr. Mede interprets the Seed of the Woman's bruising the ser-

" And stol'n dominion here; while thunder-struck,
" And headlong hurl'd, the grinning fiends forsake
" Their temples and fallacious oracles.
" What though their malice, desp'rate, may prevail,
" Permitted, o'er thy frail humanity?
" The God in safety smiles at their weak rage
" While they dishonour and confusion gain.
" Hell's masterpiece, is, ill from good to draw;
" The art of Heaven, good from the worst of ill.
" Thy death, the life of man, a ransom pays
" To thy just Father for a ruin'd world.
" Thou from his bosom didst in mortal clay
" Come, first t' instruct and then to save mankind.
" Thy triumphs here begin, as Son of man!
" The tempter, foil'd with all his boasted arts,
" No frail uxorious Adam found in thee,
" Nor vain consenting Eve! Salvation, power,
" And strength, and might, and thanks, and praise,
and love,

pent's head; where he adds a pretty observation of a certain author, that there is not only a certain impression of fear on the serpent at the sight of a man, which makes him run away, unless forced to fight for his life, which he does with a particular care of his head; but what is more remarkable, that a naked man frightens him much more than one that is clothed.

" We thus ascribe to thee, O spotless Lamb!
" Thus Hallelujah, Hallelujah sing."

" They, ending here, their Lord triumphant bore
To Jordan's banks, where John baptiz'd before.
The Baptist here his wonted task pursued;
And all the threat'nings of the law renew'd:
The weeping crowds his artless doctrine wins,
Who penitently now confess their sins.
These (when obedient to the will of Heaven
Christ had submitted to the mandate given)
Had mark'd the oral evidence bestow'd,
And with their voices hail'd him, Son of God.
But when he disappear'd, in grief they mourn'd,
Nor tasted joy till he again return'd.
But now each face, which painful sadness wore,
Put on those smiles which they assum'd before.

" Soon as he came, his Lord the Baptist spied;
Then with a shout—" 'Tis he!" in raptures cried,
" See, Israel, see the Lamb of God, design'd
" To purge thy sins, and those of lost mankind.
" Him his great Father through the clouds confess'd:
" The mystic Dove these eyes and yours attest.
" Yet God his worthless servant did prefer,
" Ere his approach, to be his harbinger;

" That Abraham's sons might with due honours meet
" Their heavenly King, and bow to kiss his feet.
" Should our bold thoughts creation's birth explore,
" This Prince did reign eternally before:
" And live he must when I to dust descend,
" His growing kingdom can sustain no end;
" His powerful voice shall speak when mine shall sleep,
" And wake the guilty from their graves to weep."

" John having paus'd, our Lord again withdrew,
Attended closely by a chosen few,
Who learn'd from him what methods to employ,
To teach mankind the road to endless joy.
From envy free, more rivals they desir'd,
To praise their Lord, and make him more admir'd.
They first through Galilee proclaim'd his name,
While crowds augmented as they heard his fame.
The gathering thousands swarm from far and near,
Flock round his standard, and with pleasure hear:
For every ill a remedy they find,
For age, and sex, for body, and for mind.

"There is a hill from whence, when looking down,
We see Tiberias and Bethsaida's town.
Upon its top the Saviour first appear'd,
And in plain terms his Father's will declar'd:
On its broad summit he explain'd the law;
And all who heard, impress'd with solemn awe.
The crowds who gather'd, fill'd an ample field,
Whose souls, awaken'd, to his doctrines yield.
From these, twelve plain, but honest men, he draws,
To teach mankind his gospel and his laws:
The learn'd and noble he refus'd to take,
But chose poor fishers from the neighbouring lake;

L. 184. *There is a hill from whence, when looking down, We see Tiberias and Bethsaida's town.*] Some place the Mount of the Beatitudes between Tiberias and Bethsaida; others east of Bethsaida, nearer Capernaum. Tradition agrees with the former opinion; the people of the country shewing to this day a little hill thereabouts, which they call *Our Lord's Table;* and which the Pilgrim, who saw it, says, is neither very large nor very high: and this opinion I choose to follow.

L. 194. *The learn'd and noble he refus'd to take.*] Undoubtedly our Saviour might have chosen his apostles from learned men; but he had great and wise ends to the contrary; namely, to humble the pride of man, and convince him, that neither birth, learning, nor any other external advantage, is so acceptable to him as holiness and virtue; and besides, to obviate such objections as he well knew

Men who their lives in honest virtue spent,
To toil inur'd, with Providence content;
That all might learn, the gifts which he bestow'd
Sprang not from men, but from their fountain, God.

"Barjona first was eager to engage,
The first in zeal, in vigour, and in age.
Firm as a rock, he boldly Christ confess'd;
Thence Cephas nam'd by him who knew him best.
His brother Andrew next, of spotless fame,
Who from Bethsaida's lovely village came.
Philip was next, who did Nathanael call,
Whose little story is well known to all.
Then Matthew freely did the world forsake,
And left its riches for his Master's sake.

would, in after ages, be made against his religion; since it was an impossible thing for such simple and illiterate men as his apostles, to compose so excellent a system both of speculative and moral truths; nor could they have them any where but from Heaven.

L. 206. *Philip was next, who did Nathanael call.*] It is generally thought that Bartholomew and Nathanael were the same. There is little to be said for it, and nothing against it. However, Nathanael has the more poetic sound, for which reason I have rather chosen it.

L. 208. *Then Matthew freely did the world forsake.*] Levi and Matthew are generally thought to have been the same person.

Matthew was follow'd by the lesser James,
Who with our Lord exalted kindred claims.
With him from Cana Simon also came,
And Jude his brother—each well known to fame.
These three to Cleopas did Mary bear;
Judas came next, our hapless treasurer.
Thomas was chosen, though but half a birth,
To spread salvation through the listening earth.
Then we, who speak to you, obtain'd the grace
To close the lists of this exalted race.
No base ambition taught us to aspire;
Our conscious vileness check'd that bold desire.

"This having done, he all those laws reveal'd
Which from the wise and prudent are conceal'd.
What truths sublime did our great Master teach,
Above the arts of eloquence to reach!
He claims the foremost rank in our esteem;—
No man e'er spoke, or ever liv'd like him.
No artful sorceries of words he tried,
Of Roman sophistry, or Grecian pride;—

L. 210, &c. *The lesser James,—Who with our Lord exalted kindred claims.*] He is called James the Less, as is conjectured, from his stature; and the brother of our Lord, Gal. i. 19. because his kinsman, after the Jewish idiom.

Courted the mean, before the haughty bow'd,
Or stole applauses from the thoughtless crowd.
Truths from his lips with strong persuasion shone,
Sanction'd by power divine, and yet his own.
They prob'd the heart where'er their influence came,
And warm'd the bosom with celestial flame.
Hear then a part of truths which Christ express'd,
And from these specimens infer the rest.

OUR SAVIOUR'S SERMON ON THE MOUNT, MATT. v. &c.

I.

"Misguided men! too justly you complain,
"Your search for happiness is made in vain:

L. 236. *Hear then a part of truths which Christ express'd.*] I cannot say, that I have wrought in every particular passage of this most excellent sermon, as it is left us entire in the fifth, sixth, and seventh of St. Matthew, and in some fragments in other of the Evangelists, being a complete summary of our Saviour's law, at least, as far as it relates to practical truths. But I think I have not omitted many things remarkable in my Paraphrase upon it; endeavouring to give, as nearly as possible, the utmost and largest import of every expression in the particular Beatitudes; under each of which I have ranked what seemed reducible to it in the following verses and chapters, adding the contrary woes from St. Luke's Gospel.

L. 239. *Your search for happiness is made in vain.*] Happiness consists solely in the enjoyment of God. God

" For what you clasp is not less false than fair;
" It tempts and cheats you with delusive air.

" There are who fancy they on bliss lay hold,
" When their strong chests are fill'd with Ophir's gold;
" They gaze with rapture on the glittering ore,
" And think their bliss increases with their store.
" These drossy minds are mix'd with more alloy
" Than taints that wealth they struggle to enjoy;
" For while they trust to substances so frail,
" Which rust may injure, thieves break through and steal,—
" Which hills may bury, accidents annoy,
" Earthquakes demolish, raging fires destroy;
" They make that happiness they deem'd so sure,
" Doubtful, uncertain, fragile, insecure.

" True bliss exists, in this precarious state,
" Beyond the reach of accidents or fate:
" Though sought in vain, 'tis always in your power,
" And scorns the influence of a luckless hour;
" Its lovely form is for itself desir'd,
" As gold by misers is as gold admir'd.

did not rest till he made man; and man cannot rest till he enjoys God. All the divine tempers here recommended and enforced, are to qualify us for this happiness.

" But gold, confin'd to earth's polluted shore,
" Clogs the bold spirit that attempts to soar.
" The ease and pleasure which its vassals find,
" Sport with their pride, and sensualize the mind;
" And when they leave that wealth of which they boast,
" It casts them naked on an unknown coast.
" Terrestrial pleasures therefore cannot be
" The solid basis of felicity.

" Meanwhile that bliss, the way to which I teach,
" Which neither fate nor accidents can reach,
" Warms those who hold it in life's varying stage,
" By climes uninjur'd, unimpair'd by age:
" And when that hour arrives which seals their doom,
" It comes with joy, and bliss survives the tomb,—
" Shines more resplendent than the solar ray,
" And beams with beauty through eternal day.
" Eternal woes are both remote and near
" To such as only lay up treasures here.
" Substantial bliss is sooner found by them
" Whom for their poverty the world contemn;—
" Who, when their conscience and my honour call,
" Learn to despise them, and abandon all.

" Who use the gifts which Providence affords,
" As faithful stewards, not as wasteful lords—
" These, rich in faith, to heaven their footsteps bend,
" And claim a kingdom which shall never end.

II.

" Unwary youth, in quest of vain delight,
" Drive heedless on, and seldom choose aright;
" The glittering phantoms flatter to betray,
" And urge them headlong on their fatal way.
" These by their furious appetites are driven
" To disregard the various calls of heaven:—
" To seek those woes the fallen angels share,—
" To grope for happiness, and find despair.
" Can then precarious and uncertain joys,
" Which prey on vice, which serious thought destroys———
" Which soon expire—can these the sources be
" Of godlike man's supreme felicity?
" Presumptuous youth! ah, whither wilt thou run!
" Why travel hard to prove thyself undone?
" Suspend thy madness, and at last return,
" And view the causes which thou hast to mourn.
" Who mourns his sins, while future moments last,
" Improves the present, and redeems the past:

" How chang'd from those, whom with new eyes they see
" Consume their days in thoughtless jollity!
" These must in flames lament:—while such as here
" Bedew their cheeks with a repentant tear;—
" Whose pensive bosoms heave with pious sighs,—
" Whose thoughts weigh anchor and explore the skies,—
" Who pant for him who, though unseen, they love,
" And seek for happiness in things above—
" Shall find their toils in Abraham's bosom cease,
" And rest for ever in eternal peace.

III.

" With vain attempts some aim their names to raise,
" And madly hunt for undeserved praise;
" Their reeking swords they bathe in human blood,
" And dive for honour in the streams they shed;
" Unhinge the world, and boast their trophies won,
" From nations vanquish'd, and from realms undone.
" Alas! such glories float on fleeting breath,
" And rarely live beyond the hero's death:
" The gaudy nothing soon as hatch'd is flown,
" And, lodg'd with others, is no more our own.

" He then who here his happiness would find,
" Grasps at a phantom, and will prove it wind.

" True magnanimity my laws impart,
" But fix it in a meek and lowly heart,
" Which lies so low has no rough storms to fear,
" But can unmov'd the rolling thunders hear.
" Soft is the texture of a humble mind,
" Where wrongs may strike, but not an entrance find;
" Which bears unmov'd the insults of the throng,
" The shafts of spite, and slander's foulest tongue.
" When you are injur'd, base returns decline,
" Repress your wrath; the vengeful rod is mine.
" False is that liberty, which leaves you free
" To love your friend and hate your enemy.
" My followers must to nobler views aspire;
" My grace exalts the human nature higher.
" If then you would my genuine servants prove,
" Bless those who curse; and such as hate you, love.

L. 334. *When you are injur'd, base returns decline.*] An elevation of the Christian doctrine, as Dr. Hammond observes, infinitely beyond the Heathen Theology. Homer, their greatest man, introduces his imaginary goddess of wisdom, encouraging Achilles to *rail* heartily at Agamemnon, though he was not to strike him.

" Pray for their lives who scarcely let you live ;
" And as forgiveness moves your hopes, forgive.
" These godlike deeds will make your virtues shine,
" And look like his whose works are all divine ;
" Whose fruitful rains and quickening sunbeams fall
" On those who hear him, or reject his call.
" Exalted thus, my faithful friends shall rise
" In holiness like him who built the skies.
" Thus shall true meekness lasting conquests gain,
" And o'er the nations in full triumph reign.

IV.

" How few we find, who true attachment show
" To aught but vain and fading goods below !
" For ease and wealth ambitious man contends,
" Nor turns his thoughts to bliss which never ends.
" He climbs the steep with unremitting pain,
" Nor thinks a grave must bound his utmost gain.
" Success with some will their bold efforts crown ;
" These seize the world, and call its joys their own:
" Their benefactor such refuse to know,
" And on his bounties press to endless woe ;
" To smiles or terrors these disdain to yield,
" And hold their hearts against conviction steel'd.

" High fed and wanton, pride assumes the rein,
" And leads its victims through false joys to pain:
" Thus doubly blinded they neglect the poor,
" While Lazarus starves, or begs from door to door.
" But soon the day which retributes will come,
" When these shall sink to meet their final doom,
" And, bound in flames, solicit, but in vain,
" One drop of water to assuage their pain:
" While Lazarus, us'd to suffer and obey,
" Shall shine with glory in unclouded day.

" Thrice happy they, for they alone are mine,
" Who thirst and hunger after food divine;
" Whose heavenly thoughts sweet meditations fill,—
" Who nobly aim to do my Father will:
" These live by faith, and firmly can repose
" On him who all their wants and sorrows knows.
" For truth and virtue be your cares express'd,
" Nor doubt that Heaven will answer for the rest.
" Why are your thoughts with anxious fears dismay'd?
" God wants not love nor power to give you aid.
" Who gives the greater, will the less provide,
" Nor food withhold, since life is not denied.
" Behold the feather'd nations of the air,
" Array'd in plumage exquisitely fair;

" Devoid of thought they warble forth their notes,
" And tune his praise with their melodious throats;
" They neither sow, nor reap, nor plant, nor plough,
" Yet find a feast on each luxuriant bough.
" Then, shall not God, who feeds each beast and bird,
" Provide more amply for Creation's Lord?
" Your anxious carkings agitate the mind,
" And drive that comfort men expect to find.
" Fear not for raiment, though compell'd to go
" Beneath your rank, undignified and low;
" Nothing but vice should give you cause to grieve,
" Or fill your bosoms with regret to live.
" For honest poverty, though not your choice,
" When sent by Heaven, demands a grateful voice.
" Behold these lilies, which unheeded grow,
" And spread their beauties in the vale below;
" Such are their robes extracted from the soil,
" For which they weave not, neither spin nor toil;
" That David's son, though richly cover'd o'er
" With gold and purple from Sidonia's shore,
" In borrow'd glories had but meanly shone,
" Compar'd with these which humbly boast their own.
" He then whose hand the fading herb supplies,
" Which lives this moment, but to-morrow dies,

" With food and raiment will much more provide
" For all *their* wants who take him for their guide.

V.

" Revenge and war the guilty world divide,
" Injustice, rapine, cruelty, and pride.
" That man is bless'd, who, full of love, bestows
" On all mankind that mercy which he knows;
" Who feels for others, and their wants relieves,
" And like a God their injuries forgives;—
" With rigour judges when his deeds he weighs,
" And those of others candidly surveys:
" Not born to cater for himself alone,
" He nobly makes another's case his own:—
" *In this just mirror all thy actions see,*
" *And do by all, as all should do by thee.*

VI.

" Vain are those arts which foolish men devise,
" To cover truth with sophistry and lies!
" Traditions teach you, that your bodies pure
" Preserve your minds from stains of sin secure.
" Whatever vain pretences these invent,
" I ask the heart, nor am with less content:

" This purg'd from sin, and fill'd with heavenly love,
" Becomes a temple for the mystic Dove,
" Whose sacred feet disdain to take their rest
" On the base soil of a polluted breast.
" Your hands, and eyes, and hearts, must all be free
" From lustful fires and foul adultery.
" The hand, if guilty, and the wandering eye,
" Must be remov'd, or all the parts will die.
" Each secret glance which glows with lawless fires,
" Lights in the soul a train of loose desires;
" While every touch of a forbidden hand
" Breaks and opposes the divine command.
" Vain are your hopes, if these you nurse, to hide
" Effects from God, in their dark causes spied;
" Whose eyes at once through worlds unnumber'd roll,
" And mark the workings of the human soul.
" Better, than lose that bliss the righteous find,
" To enter life though only lame or blind.
" Rather than sin, your appetites deny,
" And die like martyrs for true chastity,
" Through faith repelling every poisonous dart,
" For those are glorious who are pure in heart.
" Who nobly thus their mental powers employ,
" Shall share those triumphs angels now enjoy,—

" Triumphs, which here shall on their bosoms shine,—
" Prepare their souls for happiness divine,—
" Exalt their spirits to the realms above,
" And crown them there with everlasting love.

VII.

" What swarms we see displeas'd with common fame,
" All eager hunting for a sounding name.

L. 460. *What swarms we see displeas'd with common fame,*] *All eager hunting for a sounding name.*] The seventh Beatitude is, blessed are the peacemakers; "which is placed," says one, "in the zeal on all occasions of making and preserving peace." First, negociating the peace of all men with God, which was the Apostle's employment. And secondly, procuring by all means the peace of men among themselves: for this reason, putting up affronts, and suffering injuries. This character and employment should, without doubt, belong eminently to the governors and ministers of the church, who ought especially to be the φωστῆρες, the light of the world, and salt of the earth, and to teach men to keep God's commandments; but this not excluding private christians. The reward of these peacemakers is, they shall be called (shall be) the Sons of God: like to God, says Hammond, as children to a parent; being already, as the apostle says, partakers of the divine nature: true Heroes, or Sons of God; which title was vainly affected by the great men among the heathen, and sought, not by peace, but by war and bloodshed.

" These proudly bid triumphal arches rise,
" And rear the column to assail the skies.
" Vile apotheosis!——these gods must die,
" And some for crimes in endless torments lie.
" Thrice happy they, who peaceful triumphs gain,
" Who raise an empire in themselves, and reign;
" Who find employment in this mortal state
" To preach my laws, and give them all their weight,——
" Who gospel truths among mankind disperse,
" And bear these tidings round the universe.
" If all would practise what these men advise,
" This field of blood would be a paradise.
" But ere the world beholds this happy state,
" My faithful friends must meet a heavier fate:
" The truths they teach will raise a host of foes
" To thwart their views and harass their repose;
" Murder and blood my injur'd saints will stain,
" And devastations desolate the plain.
" Hell-born ambition will invade the skies,
" And pride and avarice in succession rise.
" Then such as boldly for my gospel stand,
" Unrighteous men with vicious names shall brand.
" Who speaks of peace, to vice resigns his breath,
" Or starves a martyr in the arms of death.

" Yet while enthusiasts by apostates styled,
" And as opposers of their deeds, revil'd,
" These saints, to whom opprobrious names are given,
" Are own'd above as favourite sons of Heaven.

VIII.

" Some, from their thirst inordinate for praise,
" Erect an idol with the name they raise;
" Their reputations from ambition form,
" Move at her call, and round her standard swarm.
" Should these involve you, learn from hence to know,
" The man I censure is the Saviour's foe.
" Each friend of mine must struggle to despise
" What vain ambition teaches all to prize;
" Nay, when my honour calls you to the field,
" Your reputations to reproach must yield.
" What though the world its hateful malice show,
" Denounce its vengeance, and its curses throw,—
" As false apostles stigmatize your fame,
" And basely rob you of a virtuous name?
" Your time of suffering will be shortly past,
" And you in heaven be recompens'd at last.

" The day will come, when you despis'd must share
" Those foul abuses which your Lord must bear;

" When you, from synagogues and councils hurl'd,
" Shall be repuls'd as troublers of the world.
" Then is the time your piety to show,
" And do it credit wheresoe'er you go.
" As salt to season an unwholesome race,
" Your honour lies in combating disgrace.
" Lights of the world you shine, that all may see
" In your just mirror what they ought to be.
" Yet, should they evil for your good return,—
" Condemn your spirits, and your bodies burn,
" Amidst these ills supremely bless'd ye are,
" If, free from crimes, these woes for me you bear.
" In patience wait, and be no longer sad,
" Exult, rejoice, and be exceeding glad.
" With joy to Heaven direct your hymns and prayer;
" A crown of glory waits your sufferings here:
" You first immortal from the dust shall rise,
" And nobly swell the triumphs of the skies.

L. 524. *You first immortal from the dust shall rise.*] It was an opinion generally received by the primitive christians, that the Martyrs, nay, the Confessors and eminent saints, should rise before the rest of the dead: whence that suffrage in their ancient Liturgies, *ut partem haberet in resurrectione primâ*, for a part in the first resurrection.

" But do not think, whate'er deceivers say,
" That Christ to heaven affords a nearer way.
" The truths I teach, will not repeal or break
" Those laws which God from Sinai deign'd to speak.
" From him I came to suffer, and fulfil,
" But not destroy, that transcript of his will.
" To me the types and ancient shadows tend;
" In me they centre, and obtain their end.
" Laws which of moral obligation are,
" Be it your work, your pleasure, and your care
" To keep secure: their force will be display'd
" When hoary nature shall in dust be laid;
" No jot or tittle of the whole shall fail,
" Though vice should reign or righteousness prevail.
" In awful sounds they were to Moses given,
" Amid keen lightnings, by the voice of Heaven.

L. 541. *Amid keen lightnings, by the voice of Heaven.*] The commandments were first spoken, and so are properly the Decalogue, or Ten Words; after which they were written in the two Tables, first by God, and then by Moses; Deut. v. 22. I know not whether I ought to make any apology for inserting here all the commandments, which our Saviour does not; but considering that he mentions all in general, nay, several in particular here, and most of the rest in other places, there needs no great poetical licence for my bringing them in all together.

EXODUS, XX.

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS.

" Jehovah speaks, attend with love and fear,
" From Egypt's bondage sav'd—O Israel, hear.

I.

" Let no false Gods thy love and praise divide,
" Nor hope from Heav'n thy treacherous deeds to hide.

II.

" If by an image thou express thy God,
" The child unborn shall feel his vengeful rod.

III.

" Thou shalt not take thy Maker's name in vain,
" Nor sacrilegiously his rites profane.

L. 545, &c. *Nor hope from Heav'n thy treacherous deeds to hide.*] Wherein I have given the sense of those words ἐνωπίον μου, or before me, in this commandment.

L. 546. *If by an image thou express thy God,*
The child unborn shall feel his vengeful rod.] By the word image I endeavour to express the force of the Hebrew תמונה and the Greek ὁμοίωμα, which are so comprehensive, that all the image-worshippers in the world can never get clear of them; and there is no way of answering, but by setting their Index Expurgatorius to work, and razing the word quite out of the commandment: nor need we wonder that they do so with the words of good men, when they began with those of God himself.

" Let all thy works revere thy sacred name,
" And earth and heaven creative power proclaim.
" Let thy dear Son his promis'd empire gain,
" And sinful nations own his sovereign reign.
" Let hell's proud kingdom through the world decay,
" And men as angels own thy righteous sway.
" To our frail bodies daily bread assign,
" And feed our souls with nourishment divine:
" O Thou, through whose redeeming love we live,
" Forgive our sins, as debtors we forgive!
" Save from temptation those who trust in thee,
" From present ills, and future misery.
" Thine is the kingdom and the power divine,
" And all the glory of both worlds is thine."

L. 590. *Let thy dear Son his promis'd empire gain.*] To explain this, take a remarkable passage out of a Latin Catechism printed here in England, in King Edward's time, for the use of the Protestants. On the explanation of this petition, " Thy kingdom come," (the author goes on in this manner;) Adhuc enim, &c. " For yet we see not all " things put under Christ. We see not how the stone " should be cut out of the mountain without hands, which " broke in pieces, and reduced to nothing, the image " described by Daniel: how Christ, who is the true rock, " should obtain and possess the empire of the whole world, " which is granted him by the Father: nor is Antichrist " yet destroyed. Whence we yet desire and pray, that " these things may in due time come to pass."

" But while to Heaven you thus devoutly pray,
' Your lives must witness what your lips would say ;——
" Must prove the precepts which your tongues declare,
" And holy fruit to full perfection bear.
" Should you deficient in these fruits remain,
" Your prayers are useless, and your faith is vain ;
" Vain your reliance on your suffering Lord,
" And vain your knowledge of his sacred word.
" Without repentance none can be forgiven,
" Without obedience none can enter heaven.
" Each light but this will like a meteor glow,
" And only lead you to eternal woe.

" Such then as truly my disciples prove,
" Through faith, and practice, holiness, and love,
" With strict propriety may be compar'd
" To him, whose building on the rock is rear'd.
" This, though the floods in boiling torrents rise,
" To meet fierce cat'racts rushing from the skies ;
" Though angry winds with maddening tempests sweep
" Houses and people to the foaming deep ;—

" Shall boldly stand the elemental shock,
" And smile securely on its native rock.
" But such as merely hold the Christian name,
" From baser motives, or dishonest fame;—
" Whose icy notions lead them to despise
" Those truths which censure and condemn their vice,
" May be compar'd to him, at whose command
" The building rose upon the faithless sand:
" See how it totters when the storm is nigh,
" And inundations issue from the sky!
" Thus while those waves which gather with the flood
" Drive the loose earth on which the fabric stood,
" The building crumbles with the mouldering shore,
" And insulated sinks to rise no more!"

" Thus having said, he ended his discourse,
While those who heard reflected on its force.
All seem'd well pleas'd and happy to attend,
Prais'd what he spoke, but mourn'd its hasty end.
He then retir'd, and, at a nuptial feast
Soon held in Cana, was a welcome guest.
Here condescending with his friends to dine,
He turn'd the water into luscious wine;

)t far off, by pleasant Nain's walls,
ournful widow's son to life recals.

eanwhile the Baptist did to virtue press
crowds who heard him in the wilderness.
as his language, and his life austere;
r'd no mortal, and he none would spare.
fe itself, his holy virtue thought,
l be too dear with servile flattery bought.
with Elijah's holy zeal and flame,
ıks were smitten with his virtuous fame.
acquaintance royal names aspir'd,
ır, not practise, virtues all admir'd.
ş the rest so often Herod went,
ɔme conceiv'd him almost penitent.
ıll his vices he appear'd to part,
t one lust, which twin'd about his heart.
Herodias felt a lawless flame,
ain'd his crime with incest's fouler name.
as this princess, beautiful and vain,
: lord in poor Trachonitis did reign.
andering Arabs, hostilely inclin'd,
d his empire and disturb'd his mind.
ll'd by these he took the bloody field,
/e their forces which refus'd to yield.

His armed troops the Ishmaelites pursue
Through stony plains and groves of poisonous yew;
But soon he hop'd to join his spouse and court,
And all the fortunes of the war report.

" While Philip, thus intent on foreign wars,
Had left his empire and resign'd its cares,
Herod invited fair Herodias down
To strong Tiberias, his own stately town,
Until his brother from the field return'd
To greet his princess who his absence mourn'd.

L. 668, &c. *His armed troops the Ishmaelites pursue Through stony plains and groves of poisonous yew.*] Strabo gives an account of the wild and savage temper of these Itureans, calling them by no better a name than κακούργους, either Rogues or Witches, and describing those parts full of caves, woods, and inaccessible mountains, so infested with robbers, that the Romans were forced to keep constant guards there for the security of the country. They were, it seems, excellent archers both in Itnrea and Trachonitis; the bows of the first being famous as far as Rome. And Josephus tells us, that Gratus the Roman General conquered the thieves that wasted Judæa, by the help of the bow-men of Trachonitis. Bell. Jud. Lib. 2. Cap. 8. He also gives a pleasant account of this poor Prince Philip, that he used to have his seat of justice carried about with him wherever he went; though he gives him withal such a character as he could not give his wealthier brother; for he says, he was a just and honest man.

" Arriv'd, the guilty couple lost in sense
Plung'd deep in sin, and rose in impudence.
Their flagrant actions broke through every bound
Which love prescrib'd, or common prudence found.
Herod's amour was public in his court,
His queen's dejection, and his flatterers' sport.
His lawful consort he disdain'd to own,
And soon repuls'd her from his bed and throne.
Long had her father fair Damascus sway'd,
And Zobah's people his commands obey'd.
The fields of Aram, and their troops, though wild,
Had bless'd his reign and own'd him from a child.
Through Geshur's regions fam'd for pastures green,
His power was known, and reach'd the Hagarene.

" To him enrag'd the queen of Herod fled
Against the rival of her crown and bed;

L. 686, &c. *Long had her father fair Damascus sway'd,*
And Zobah's people his commands obey'd.]
One Aretas, we are sure, was King of Damascus not long after our Saviour's time, who is mentioned in the acts of the apostles. That one of the same name (who was Herod's father-in-law) was king of one of the Arabias, Josephus tells us; and that his daughter fled from Herod to her father about the matter of Herodias; for which reason the old king entered his territories, and gave him battle, wherein Herod was worsted, his army forsaking him; which, the same author adds, the people looked on as a judgment on him for his cruelty against the Baptist.

Complain'd of both with unrelenting hate,
And urg'd her interest to procure their fate.
Her aged father youthful anger warms,
Who full of vengeance his Arabians arms,
And meditates a quick tremendous blow
Against his daughter's rival, lord, and foe.

"Herod meanwhile, remorseless, on his throne
Kept Philip's partner, but divorc'd his own.
Through all his court those deeds contagious prov'd,
Which most in silent imitation lov'd;
While all his parasites with flattering skill
Made vice and virtue serve their master's will.
At length the vices which prevail'd at court
Spread by example, sanction, and report,
Till fame convey'd them where the Baptist stood
And taught mankind by Jordan's swelling flood.

"Inspir'd by Heaven, he hasten'd to the place
To see the king, and witness his disgrace;—
To use plain speech, his conscience to alarm,
To rouse his spirit, and dispel the charm;—
To show the bane his sycophants had brought,
And counteract the deleterious draught.

Towards the palace John his footsteps bent
Through prostrate crowds who hail'd him as he went.
The opening guards on his approach gave way,
Struck with an awe which border'd on dismay;
Till, every gate and antechamber pass'd,
He reach'd th' alcove of their deep guilt at last;
Which seem'd an arbour fitted up to please
The sons and daughters of licentious ease.
The Baptist here for no inviting stay'd,
He sought no favours, and no fears betray'd;
But press'd at once upon the guilty pair,
And charg'd them with reproofs they could not bear.
He found Herodias negligently dress'd,
And saw the king lean loosely on her breast;
Their wanton looks their guilty state proclaim'd,
And all the proofs of *damn'd* ADULTERY nam'd.

"Fierce Herod rose at the unwonted noise,
And sternly ask'd, with a tremendous voice
And eyes all flaming—"What intruders dare
"Their prince's privacy destroy or share,
"And rush on certain fate?"—"Nay, rather tell,
"How dare ye bold adulterers rush on hell?"
The Baptist firmly cries. The monarch saw
And heard the prophet with remorse and awe.

Speechless he stood; Herodias did the same,
Now pale with rage, then reddening into shame.
Such is the power undaunted virtue brings
To vanquish beauty and the pride of kings.
Hard was the struggle in the royal breast,
While truth and passion each its claims express:
Now half averted from his tempter's eyes,
His bosom heav'd with penitential sighs;
Now caught again in glances which he lov'd,
His weak resolves but births abortive prov'd.
The prince of hell, eternal foe to good,
Perceiv'd the doubts in which the monarch stood;
Then, on his side to force him to engage,
Urg'd him with lust, and fill'd her soul with rage.
Silent he stood, while thus Herodias said,
" Presumptuous priest, thy speech shall cost thy head.
" On Jordan's banks I hear thou cheatest well
" The thoughtless herd with dreadful tales of hell.
" Let servile wretches virtue's laws obey,
" But kings to heaven can find an easier way.
" Guards, take him hence, and let him learn too late,
" Lodg'd in a dungeon, his approaching fate."

" The king arising, with the fair debates,
And her harsh sentence partly mitigates;

Confirm'd that part which order'd his arrest,
But seem'd unwilling to enforce the rest;
Yet bade his guards the patriarch secure,
And within strong Macherus' walls immure.
Each warrior strove to raise some just excuse
To shun an action no one durst refuse.
Some for the prisoner indirectly plead,
Who smiles, and bids them to the dungeon lead.
Again commanded by the tyrant, they
With much regret reluctantly obey;
And having plac'd him in the prison, all
Retire in grief, where each his duties call.

" Soon after this, the tyrant summon'd forth,
To celebrate the day which gave him birth,
His statesmen, captains, counsellors, and lords,
To taste that bounty royalty affords.
The rank debauch with generous wine was crown'd,
And all their reason in the flood was drown'd.
The midnight scenes concluded with a ball,
And wanton music consummated all.

L. 767. *And within strong Macherus' walls immure.*] Some say, that John the Baptist was beheaded in Macherus; others, in Sebaste. Josephus seems to be for the former, in his Antiquities, Lib. 1. Cap. 10.

" Among the female dancers who resort
To grace the splendours of the tyrant's court,
One daughter, who, ere base Herodias fled,
Had bless'd the injur'd Philip's nuptial bed,
Shone in the dance superior to the rest,
And gave new pleasures to the despot's breast.
Too soon in her the world her mother spied,
The same fair face, and unexampled pride :
Like her, of slaves she had a mighty band,
And could, like her, smiles, tears, and oaths command;
Like her, drop poison from her eyes and tongue,
And gain attention if she danc'd or sung.
It chanc'd when some Arabian tune was play'd,
The youthful sorceress all her wiles display'd ;
Her feet with elegance and quickness mov'd,
And all who saw her, prais'd, admir'd, or lov'd.
The king, extravagantly pleas'd and proud,
Join'd the applause which burst from all the crowd,
Lengthen'd those plaudits which her ears devour,
And stood unrivall'd both in praise and power.
" I swear by heaven's unutter'd Name," he cried,
" Ask what thou wilt, it shall not be denied.
" Though half my kingdom were the great demand;
" My word is gone, and Herod's word shall stand."

The damsel heard, and instantly withdrew
To see what object might attract her view;
At length, instructed by her mother, said,
" Give in this charger John the Baptist's head."
The king exclaim'd, " rather than that should fall,
" Take, cruel maid, not only half, but all:
" Take my dominions, but my word release,
" And let the prophet end his days in peace."
She, old in vice, inexorable stood,
And sternly clamour'd for the Baptist's blood;
Nor could persuasions turn her vile intent,
Or once avert the vengeance which she meant.
The council call'd, their suffrages divide,
Some took the damsel's, some the monarch's side:
Some from revenge against the prophet spoke;
Through love and interest some with conscience broke:
A generous few admitted what he said,
And thought his oath was indiscreetly made,
And thence unlawful. These were overborne
By greater numbers, and repell'd with scorn.
The king, uneasy, at the faction rail'd,
And saw with grief the party which prevail'd;
At length with tears reluctantly gave way,
And bade his guards the damsel's voice obey.

" With painful search they found a hoary knave,
To take that life the monarch would not save.
He in the dungeon soon the Baptist spied,
And sternly said—" For instant death provide."
" That work is done," the holy prophet said,
And, smiling, offer'd to the axe his head:
" Full well I know I am but mortal born;
" I came from dust, and must to dust return;
" The debt of nature must by all be paid,
" And kings must walk through death's impervious shade.
" In God's fair cause, for injur'd truth, I die,
" And John shall smile when those who kill him sigh.
" But if on life's last verge our souls can see
" Within the realms of dark futurity,
" My guiltless blood, within this dungeon shed,
" Will be aveng'd on guilty Herod's head.
" I see the Arabs from their quarters pour
" On his domains a dusky deadly shower.
" I see "—the ruffian will no time afford,
But lifts on high his unrelenting sword;
Its quick descent an easy passage found,
And life departed through the bleeding wound.

" His head, which ruffians to the banquet bear,
Was seiz'd with joy by false Herodias there,
Who, lest they should her cruelty delude,
Wip'd from his face the warm and clotted blood;
And having view'd it, cried with savage glee,
Before the court and trembling king—" 'Tis he.
" Now, daring censures at a princess fling;
" Now, if thou canst, preach on and scorn a king."

" Short were the triumphs of this worthless guest,
And sad the tidings to conclude the feast.
In dreadful haste a messenger appear'd,
Whose looks betray'd the news his tongue declar'd.
His clothes were dusty,—terror and surprise
Pronounc'd a prologue in his face and eyes.
He pale and trembling through the circle springs,
And to the king these doleful tidings brings:
" Renown'd Aretas with his hostile bands
" Has gain'd a passage through Iturea's lands.
" His troops near Cesarea Jordan pass'd,
" And all the higher Galilee laid waste
" With fire and sword. To them strong Abel's town
" Its gates has open'd. Now they're marching down

L. 874.————*To them strong Abel's town.*] Abel-Bethmaacha was a strong town near the north borders of Galilee, into which Sheba threw himself when pursued by David's army.

" To Kedesh, and to lofty Ramah near,
" Prepar'd to yield, all struck with panic fear."

" The conscious guilt which flush'd in Herod's eyes
Perplex'd his measures—yet " To arms," he cries,
" With eager haste the bold invaders meet,
" And stretch their leader at your conquering feet;
" To his bold march present an iron shore,
" From which his legions shall return no more."
He then his troops from proud Sebaste draws,
And strong Macherus, which th' Arabian awes.
To these he added those of Baara's vale,
Of Carmel's mount, and Hermon's fruitful dale.
To join his force, his powerful treasure brings,
From Ishmael's race, auxiliary kings.
The whole combin'd enabled him to boast,
Had Heaven stood still, a formidable host.
Amidst his vice the wretch to Heaven applied,
And strangely blended piety and pride;—

L. 886. *To these he added those of Baara's vale.*] Josephus says, Herod kept a strong garrison in Macherus to bridle the Arabians; just against which was the famous valley of Baaras, for the wonders of which that historian has been so much talked of.

Ambitious offerings to the temple sent,
And more than all, half promis'd to repent;—
In haste a message to the prison sends,
And John's dead body offers to his friends;—
The mangled corpse directs them to inter,
That he with tears might bathe his sepulchre.
But these disguises all with ease perceiv'd,
Nor earth nor Heaven his penitence believ'd;
Hence crown'd with curses to the field he went;
His army fell;—you know the sad event.

"The death of John, and Herod's late defeat,
In Christ's disciples serious fears create.
The twelve with Christ in rich Capernaum lay,
And watch'd the frowns of each succeeding day;
In tears of sorrow these the Baptist mourn'd,
Till Herod frantic to his court return'd;
Then with their Lord they silently remov'd,
And in a desert sought that peace he lov'd.
This safe retreat was near Bethsaida found,
Whose sons the doctrines of the Saviour own'd.

L. 912. *This safe retreat was near Bethsaida found.*] It is sometimes called a village, at others a town or city; though if only a village, large enough, according to Josephus; who says, that every village in Galilee, even the

The sacred precepts they had heard before,
Instead of cloying, made them wish for more.
With his lov'd few he therefore thither went,
And in the town some peaceful moments spent;
Spoke of events which yet remain'd behind,
And his last efforts to redeem mankind.
Yet these at length in vice obdurate grow,
And with Chorazin find one common woe:—
Still harden more from numerous blessings given,
Till flagrant crimes provoke the wrath of Heaven.
But though his judgments are obscur'd by shade,
The day will come when all shall stand display'd;
Then all the swarms of this terrene abode
Shall vindicate the attributes of God.

least of them, contained 15,000 inhabitants (but surely there must be some mistake in the number). This Bethsaida, he says, was for the pleasantness of it erected into a city, and called Julias; but let it be then what it would, our Saviour's woe is now accomplished against it, and it is reduced to its first original, a lodge in the wilderness; nothing thereof now remaining, as travellers tell us, besides seven or eight scatter'd cottages, which scarcely deserve the name of houses.

CONTENTS

OF THE

FIFTH BOOK.

THE apostle proceeds, and relates the miracle
he loaves; at which the multitude surprised, would
in have forced our Saviour to accept of the king-
ı; but he retires from them, and continues all night
ying in one of the Proseuchæ or oratories of the
rs, having sent his disciples across the lake towards
ernaum; whom he overtakes, walking on the
before it was day. The disciples are affrighted,
knowing his voice, St. Peter leaves the ship and
s towards him; but, when ready to sink, he is
ported by our Lord; who entering the ship, they
ediately land near Capernaum; to which place
Saviour goes with his disciples, being followed by
multitude more for interest than devotion. His
non to them on that subject, and discourse concern-
eating his flesh and drinking his blood; at which
Jews being offended, many of his followers for-
e him; and upon his apostles' protestation of
lity, he prophesies that one of them should betray
. He cures the son of Chuza, Herod's steward;
which Chuza himself, who had been before an

Herodian, became his disciple, with all his house. The miracle of the Centurion's servant, Simon's wife's mother, and the Paralytic, at Capernaum; and that on blind Bartimeus, at Jericho. Our Lord, going up to Jerusalem, curses the barren fig-tree, cures one that was born blind, purges the temple of buyers and sellers the first time, and heals the infirm man at the Pool of Bethesda; which last miracle, with some cursory remarks, concludes the fifth Book.

THE

LIFE

OF

CHRIST.

BOOK V.

THUS far the fathers strict attention paid,
Nor any signs of weariness betray'd;
Though restless Sol triumphantly had driven
His flaming coursers to the top of heaven.
Th' apostle paus'd: his hearers would not stay,
But urge him on, impatient of delay—
Press'd him with importunity, to tell
Christ's every word, and every miracle.

"Our Lord," he said, "who sought to be conceal'd,
By his retreat was rather more reveal'd;
Just as the sun is with more eyes survey'd,
When half eclips'd he shines through dusky shade.
The place where Jesus and his twelve repos'd,
Was by some shepherds to the towns disclos'd:

Thence gathering thousands his recesses found,
And with his twelve encompass'd him around.
He, on an easy hillock mounted, taught
The crowds who came, and cur'd the sick they brought:
With him the multitude unwearied stay,
Till lengthening shadows show'd declining day,
When his apostles anxiously desir'd
That all might go before the day retir'd;
For in the desert, they, with hunger press'd,
And trav'lling tir'd, had neither food nor rest.

"The Saviour, hearing, turn'd his tender eyes
Towards the multitude, and thus replies:
"Shall we from Heaven benevolence receive,
"And to our guests no kind refreshment give,
"Who, when keen hunger and dark night oppress,
"Might faint and perish in the wilderness?

L. 26. *Towards the multitude, and thus replies.*] It is a common mode of speech, both of the evangelists and other holy writers, to introduce persons replying or answering, where there is at most only an involved question going before. So St. Matthew, xi. 25. "Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father," &c. though we read of no preceding question or compellation; an usual Hebraism, as Maldonate says on the place, the word ענה signifying not only answering a question, but also beginning or continuing a speech.

" Such blessings rather as your stores impart,
" Let all present them with a cheerful heart."
Philip and Andrew, hearing this, replied,
" Whence shall we bread for such vast crowds
provide?
" We have two fishes which we lately took
" With toilsome angling on the neighbouring brook;
" These and five loaves are all the stock we boast,
" But ten times five among such crowds were lost."
Our Lord rejoin'd—" Proportion to your store
" Your various gifts, and Heaven will ask no more.
" Go then, and let the company be plac'd;
" Give what you have, and leave to me the rest."
These powerful words with majesty he said,
And we with wonder and with faith obey'd.
Five thousand men we plac'd upon the grass,
But let the rest without a reckoning pass.
A hundred troops the num'rous party made,
Who for some unknown benefaction stay'd;
Ranks crowding ranks behind each other spread,
Who all the wond'rous miracle survey'd.

L. 47. *A hundred troops the num'rous party made.*] St. Luke ix. 14, 15. " Make them sit down by fifties in a company;" a hundred of which fifties there are in five thousand.

Christ in his hands the loaves and fishes takes,
And speaks a word, or only looks, and makes.
His heart to Heaven in fervent prayer he rais'd,
And his Great Father for each favour prais'd;
Then bless'd and brake.—We took the large supplies,
But scarcely credited our hands and eyes—
The gifts distributed among the crowd,
Who ate, astonish'd at the boon bestow'd.
From this small source an undiminished store
Supplied each want, and left abundance more.

"For while we gaz'd on this amazing feast,
Our rising wonder like the loaves increas'd.
"Let all the fragments of the fish and bread
"Be gather'd up," our Heavenly Master said.
We rose obedient from our pleasing treat,
And fill'd twelve baskets with the broken meat:

L. 66. *And fill'd twelve baskets with the broken meat.*] There are two different words used for what we render baskets, Κόφινοι, and σπυρίδες; the former in the miracle of the five thousand, the latter of the four thousand, as Grotius and others remark. These twelve baskets seem to have been the proper goods of the twelve apostles, serving them for the conveyance of fish, or as a kind of sea chests, to hold all their necessaries. The σπυρίδες, Dr. Hammond thinks, were a larger sort of κόφινοι, since one of them was

These to our friends we speedily convey'd,
Who at some distance in a vessel stay'd.
The shouting people shook the trembling ground,
With "Christ" and "miracle" the hills resound;
In grateful songs the women spread his fame,
And stammering babes were taught to lisp his name.

"Meanwhile the men in groups together crowd;
Some whispering murmur'd, others spoke aloud.
At length the whole, as from deliberate choice,
In words like these proclaim'd the public voice:
"Why should we thus the yoke of bondage wear,
"Or Herod's tyranny or Cæsar's bear?
"Has not kind Heaven a great Deliverer sent,
"To cure our bodies and supply each want,
"To give us life if in his cause we die,
"And call assistance from the distant sky—
"Greater than Moses by himself foretold,
"And all the holy messengers of old?
"That greatness, whence he learn'd a crown to scorn,
"Nobly declares him for a sceptre born.

big enough to hold a man; St. Paul being let down from Damascus, εν σπυρίδει, in a basket, as we render it, Acts, ix. 25. our word not noting a limited capacity, but only the kind of vessel.

" We form an army in ourselves as great
" As Judas had when he controll'd the state—
" Greater than that which brave Matthias join'd,
" When none but Modin's villagers combin'd.
" Why should his bashful modesty restrain
" Our public suffrage, which demands his reign?
" His standard rais'd shall to Tiberias go;
" Samaria next his powerful arms shall know;
" At length in Solyma, when stronger grown,
" Our Prince shall mount his father David's throne."

" The gath'ring faction palms and garments bring,
And madly shouted—" Hail, great Israel's king!"
Their dangerous kindness he in part suppress'd,
And sought retirement to avoid the rest;
Against a sceptre urging his defence,
And taking measures to depart from thence.

L. 89, &c. *Greater than that which brave Matthias join'd, When none but Modin's villagers combin'd.*] Josephus, Antiq. lib. 12. cap. 8. says, those who joined Matthias were no more at first than the inhabitants of the small village of Modin. And even when his son Judas came against the army of Antiochus, under Gorgias and Nicanor, consisting of forty thousand foot and seven thousand horse, he had no more than three thousand men, and those raw and badly armed. Cap. xi. of the same book.

Far more he seem'd of friends than foes afraid,
And sought for safety in the neighbouring shade:
Favour'd by this, and urg'd by strong desire,
His burden'd spirit hasten'd to retire;
And in an arbour, where he often pray'd,
Escap'd that tumult which the crowd had made.—
Its sides were wall'd, a sure defence to yield
From savage beasts which prowl by night the field.
Our Lord alone in holy hymns and prayer
Continued here till night began to wear;

L. 109. *Its sides were wall'd, a sure defence to yield*] I take that passage in St. Luke, vi. 12. where it is said, that our Lord continued all night in prayer to God, ἐν τῇ προσευχῇ τοῦ θεοῦ, to relate to the place, even more immediately than the action, according to the opinion of Drusius, Dr. Hammond, Mr. Mede, and other learned men, who think this ἐν τῇ προσευχῇ τοῦ θεοῦ, ought to be translated, in the Proseucha, Prayer-House, or Oratory of God; the form of which Oratories Mr. Mede describes from Epiphanius, after whom I have copied. His conjecture he makes more probable by Philo's ἐδενδροτόμησεν, the Alexandrians cutting down the trees of the Jewish Proseuchas or Oratories: and the same is probable from that comparison of David, "I am like a green olive-tree in the house of my God."

L. 112. *Continued here till night began to wear.*] The τετάρτη φύλακη, or fourth watch of the night, among the Jews, was undoubtedly near day; but the phrase ὀψίας γενομένης is here used, St. Matth. xiv. 23. "When the

But left this sweet alcove ere dawn'd the day,
To seek his followers toiling on the sea.

" His chosen twelve, at his supreme command,
Had left the crowd to gain Capernaum's land;
And in a vessel we forsook the shore,
Bethsaida's coasts, which join'd it, to explore.
The night, though flattering, prov'd at last unkind,
And left our bark expos'd to seas and wind.
Though toss'd with tempests, we could make no way,
When certain signals show'd approaching day;

evening was come, he was there alone. 24. But the ship was tossed. 25. And in the fourth watch of the night," &c. Now, the same word ὀψία is used, v. 15. " When it was evening." Dr. Hammond thus reconciles these places, " that the word ὀψία is taken in different senses, " sometimes for the precise evening, or sun-set, at others " synecdochically for the whole night, as morning for " the day." So in Moses, " the evening and the morning were the first day," a natural day of twenty-four hours. Thus, in the first place, it is to be taken for the precise evening or sun-set; in the latter, for the whole night: to which might be added, that the second ὀψία may be at a great distance from τετάρτη φύλακη, see v. 23. " When the evening was come, our Saviour was alone in the mountain praying;" which must take up some time; as it did, we know, whole nights together: then v. 24. " The ship was in the midst of the sea; and v. 25. In the fourth watch of the night Jesus went unto them," &c.

But still our eyes could scarcely see the light,
Or find our sea-marks in the stormy night.
The waves seem'd angry, and our ship was toss'd,
And we half found'red gave ourselves for lost.
Our mast was broken, and our helm was gone,
And boiling surges drove the vessel on.
Enclos'd with death we thought it vain to strive,
And not one soul expected to survive.
But life is dear, some therefore ready stood
To seize a plank, and shun the furious flood
On boards or rafts, if they on these could stand,
And reach, though naked, the contiguous strand.
And ere we ventur'd on the awful swell,
Each spoke to each, and took his last farewell.

" We scarce had ended, ere Barjona saw
A distant form which fill'd our souls with awe:
It seem'd approaching to our shatter'd bark,
But this was doubtful, for the night was dark.
At length we look'd: all saw it, all agreed,
Each saw the form undoubtedly proceed.
As it advanc'd, distinctly it appear'd,
And gave new terrors to the death we fear'd:
Its shape was human, walking on the sea;
Each step it took created new dismay:

It seem'd to all, who gaz'd with much affright,
Some horrid spectre roving in the night:
And as it came, we plainly could perceive
It meant to board the wreck we wish'd to leave.
But while with horror to the stern we fled,
The strange appearance mildly spoke, and said:—
"Courage, my friends; assistance still is near;
"Behold your Lord, and give the winds your fear."
His well-known voice with hopes and fears we heard,
But scarce believ'd that help so near appear'd.

"Cephas, with smiles, forgetting sea and shore,
Grew strong in faith, though he was weak before;
And boldly said—"If thou the Saviour be,
Repeat thy voice, and bid me come to thee."
Again he spoke, while rapt in joy we stood,
And beckon'd Peter to attempt the flood.
He left the wreck, and trod the watery field,
Whose solid waves like rocks refus'd to yield.
With daring feet through unknown paths he goes,
And walk'd majestic as the surges rose.
But when he saw the surly ocean frown,
The hollow hanging waves look low'ring down;
When in a dreadful vale, the seas and night
Conjoin'd to intercept the Saviour's sight;—

The stormy winds obstruct his wonderous race,
And dash the twisted foam against his face;—
Surpris'd with fear, he felt the slippery wave
Betray his feet, and cried—" O Master, save."
He heard and sav'd; but did his fears upbraid,
And mildly ask'd him, " why he seem'd afraid;
" Whence he so soon could so forgetful prove,
" Suspect his power, or criminate his love?"
Our vessel then the wonderous pair receiv'd,
And all with Cephas stedfastly believ'd;
All join'd in songs the Saviour to adore,
And soon in safety reach'd the welcome shore.

" With tranquil hearts the sounding beach we walk'd,
And of our fears and recent dangers talk'd.
While thus engag'd, the cheerful orb of day
On Hermon's hill diffus'd its sacred ray.
Our nets and clothes we then prepar'd to spread,
To meet the sun upon a sandy bed.

L. 186. *On Hermon's hill diffus'd its sacred ray.*] Hermon was east of Jordan and the sea of Galilee, Deut, iv. 47, 48. " They possessed their land (of Sihon and Og) on this side Jordan (the wilderness' side, where this book must have been written), toward the sun-rising, from Aroer, which is by the bank of the river Arnon, even unto Mount Sion (lxx. the Mount of Sihon), which is Hermon."

These quickly dried, we to Capernaum went,
To whose fair walls his steps the Saviour bent.
But ere we reach'd it, as we backward threw
Our wandering eyes, the lake we left to view,
We saw its side towards the western shore
With men and ships completely cover'd o'er;
The crowds who still remain'd upon the sand
With eager haste prepar'd to leave the strand;
To press that water their companions press'd,
And seek the Saviour on its placid breast.
Hence the soft surface of its native green,
Conceal'd by vessels, scarcely could be seen.
These from the shore the hardy seamen shove,
And half the bay appear'd a floating grove.
So when their flight a flock of locusts take
From Lubim's wild, or Chelonidian's lake,

L. 203—206. *So when their flight a flock of locusts take*
From Lubim's wild, or Chelonidian's lake,
While Mizraim's sons their foolish ox implore
To drive the plague which hovers on their shore.]
All authors who write of Africa observe, that those deserts produce vast armies of these destructive creatures. A people there called the Ἀκριδόφαγι, or locust-eaters, take their names from making reprisals upon them, and devouring them, because they have left nothing else to eat. See the Scholiast or Dionysius, v. 550, 569. Diodorus, Strabo, and several of the ancients (as Ludolfus since), and others quoted by Bochart, Lib. 4. Cap. 3. give us their description

While Mizraim's sons their foolish ox implore 205
To drive the plague which hovers on their shore;—

and history; that learned man deriving one of the Arabian names, Alhabsan, from Abyssinia, a part of Africa, which they seldom fail to visit, being brought thither, by winds, from those vast sandy tracts of ground that lie south and west, in which are the Chelonidian fens, Chelonides Paludes in the geographer, by a continual stream discharging themselves into the Niger. Now the same south or westwinds which brought them from the wilderness, might carry them on to Egypt; Bochart being of opinion, that the Egyptian locusts came from this country: though I rather believe they took not so long a journey, being borne from Arabia Felix, east of Egypt; and where enough of them are often found to supply all their neighbours; the Arabians being but too well acquainted with them, and their writers giving a more particular description of them than any others. It may not be unpleasant to instance in one, because of his odd easterly way of expression, who complains of their molesting them at their very tables: he is quoted by Bochart, in his Locusta, in these words, "Algesen, the son of "Aly, said, we were sitting at a table, I and my brother "Mahumed, the son of Alchanasia, and the sons of my "uncle Abdalla, and Kethem, and Alphidal, the sons of "Alibas, when a locust lit upon the table, in the middle "of us," &c. However, though Bochart's conjecture may not here hold, because it is said that it was רוּחַ קָדִים, an east wind, that brought these locusts, for which reason they must rather come from Arabia which lies east, than Ethiopia which is south from Egypt; yet they may be, and are frequently, carried thither from Abyssinia, by those south and west winds, which often bring them from the Cape, or the deserts of Mount Atlas. As to my expression, the plague which hovers, it is agreeable to what historians

So when the west winds from their reedy coast
Drive off those swarms in which their hopes were lost,
From their fair fields the straggling squadrons sweep,
And hurl them headlong in th' Arabian deep;—

relate of the vast flights of these locusts, which sometimes obscure the sun, and darken large tracts of ground; two of their names, חגב and צלצל, being derived, by Bochart, from such roots as imply veiling and darkness; who further affirms out of Cadamastus, that they sometimes reach twelve miles together. And Surius says, "That even in "Poland, in the year 1541, a cloud of them appeared two "miles in length, and hindered the light of the sun from "all that tract of ground over which they flew."

L. 207. *So when the west winds from their reedy coast*] Exod. x. 19. "The Lord turned a mighty strong west wind, which took away the locusts, and cast them into the Red Sea." I call it a reedy coast, because the sea is styled in the Hebrew, Jam Zuph, the reedy, sedgy, or flaggy sea, from the multitudes of flags and weeds which grow in it, as well as on its bank; "though never so many ill weeds there," says Fuller, after his way, "as when the Egyptians were drowned in it."

L. 210. *And hurl them headlong in th' Arabian deep.*] The Red Sea is also called by Dionysius and others Κόλπος Ἀραβικός, the Arabian gulf (now Mare de Mecca), from its washing the shores of Arabia. This is the usual end of those creatures, as Pliny, Jerome, and others, say. I will only instance in Sigebert, even in our own country, who tells us in his Chronicle, "That after a parcel of these "Tartarian travellers had made a straggling visit into "Europe, and put all France under contribution (or rather

So looks the gulf, when they a period find
To their long voyage, driven by the wind;
From shore to shore their breathless millions spread,
And check the tide with ramparts of the dead:—
Thus seem'd the lake, when from the distant side
The sails were spread, and dashing oars were plied:
While they with toil the Saviour's tract pursued,
And in their minds his miracles review'd.
But when the gale began to rouse the deep,
They chang'd their course, nor took their destin'd sweep;
Their numerous vessels sought the yielding sand,
And at Capernaum they safely land.

"Here with surprise they soon the Saviour found
For well they knew he had not coasted round,

"Military execution), they were at last all carried away by a "blast of wind, and drowned in the British ocean, in such "vast numbers, that being thrown up again on the shores, "their putrified bodies infected the air, and brought a "terrible pestilence, which destroyed an incredible number "of men."

L. 223. *Here with surprise they soon the Saviour found.*] They might well be surprised to find him there so soon in the morning, knowing that his disciples went away without him; it being at least fourteen or fifteen miles from the *Mountain of Miracles* (supposing it to be south of Bethsaida, where it is generally placed) round to Capernaum; the sea

By land or sea, Bethsaida's bending shore :
No boat was there ; his own had sail'd before.
Arriv'd, they ask'd him how he thither came ?
For all were anxious to enjoy his fame.
He saw what motives had become their guide,
And thus with some severity replied :
" If I to gratify your pride should tell,
" This would no more than my last miracle
" Convince your unbelief. Too well I see
" My loaves and fishes are preferr'd to me.
" Unhappy men, you waste your time in vain
" The fading riches of the world to gain ;
" You madly toil for unsubstantial food,
" And things which perish call your greatest good ;
" Nor once attempt to taste without alloy
" That meat which saints in other worlds enjoy :
" Of these repasts my faithful friends partake,
" Who quit your follies for your Master's sake.

being, according to Josephus, fourteen or fifteen miles long, and six or seven broad, and this voyage containing about half the length, and all the breadth of it, besides the loss of way by creeks and turnings. Both Chorazin and Capernaum now lie buried in dust and ruins : the *Pilgrim*, who saw them, tells us, that even Capernaum itself consists of nothing but three or four fishing cabins near the lake.

" To give them life, the Son of God was given;
" To purchase glory, he came down from heaven;
" To prove his mission, miracles were sent;
" To save mankind, he calls them to repent;
" For none but these his blessings shall receive,
" Who, with that faith which works by love, believe."

" The thoughtless crowd, on miracles intent,
Despis'd the ends for which these signs were sent;
Each felt his soul by novelty inspir'd,
And all new causes of amaze desir'd.
Some ask'd for manna, which their sires despis'd;
And some, demurring, gold and silver priz'd;
Ignobly sunk in laziness and pride,
The sensual vices all HIS views defied.
Each seem'd ambitious to espouse his cause,
To raise his empire, but subvert his laws:
And had our Lord, his auditors to win,
Freed them from labour, and indulg'd their sin;—
Had he, their clamours and huzzas to gain,
Taught them in shameful idleness to reign;—

L. 253. *Some ask'd for manna, which their sires despis'd.*] It seems, the Jews desired our Lord to give them manna, which they tacitly beg, St. John, vi. 31. and more plainly v. 34.

The mass, attentive to each word he spoke,
Had rescued Judah from her foreign yoke.

" But Christ, who knew their motives and their deeds,
From their ambition and intrigues recedes.
In all his words he recommended toil,
And nobly scorn'd to flatter or beguile;
Nor would perform those wonders which they lov'd,
To please the vanity by which they mov'd:
For greatest miracles which common grow,
Lose all their force, and are no longer so.
Yet thus he spoke: " The manna Moses brought
" To feed your fathers for the land they sought,
" Was not from him; from Heav'n the gift came down,
" Its various mercies to display and crown.
" Your sires partook of this material bread,
" Whose mouldering ashes lie among the dead.
" But great and numerous as these blessings were,
" They stand eclips'd by those I now declare;
" Superior blessings Heaven designs to give,
" And those who eat this bread of life shall live.
" In me, behold this spiritual supply,
" And such as come shall eat and never die.

" But know, vain men, the bread which I bestow
" Suits not the taste of all who dwell below.
" Material food the human frame requires;
" The food I give the human mind inspires.
" Who eats, renew'd with vigour all divine,
" Shall do my Father's heavenly will and mine;
" Shall live protected till his days are o'er,
" And die, to hunger and to thirst no more;
" In life and death shall bear this constant sign,
" By faith and holiness distinguish'd mine.

" As man from Heav'n derives his every good,
" So with my Spirit these shall be endued;—
" Against temptation find superior power,
" Nor be forsaken in the final hour.
" But only such as to my laws incline,
" And nobly keep them,—these alone are mine:
" Not earth's weak force, nor hell's infernal bands,
" Shall snatch or wrest them from their Saviour's hands:
" His power shall shield them; and his guardian care
" To joys immortal shall their spirits bear;
" And when that day, which all the guilty dread,
" To endless life shall wake the trembling dead,
" These sons of light, escap'd from grief and pain,
" Shall with the Saviour judge the world and reign."

" These serious truths and awful scenes amuse,
And strangely harden the obdurate Jews.
Some his pretensions, some his birth deride,
And some condemn his poverty and pride:
" Was not this prophet," they exclaim'd with scorn,
" Of mean descent, a Galilean born!
" In little Nazareth his parents live,
" And want those alms which he affects to give.
" His father works at a mechanic trade,
" His mother proofs of poverty betray'd:
" His mean relations mingle with our tribes,
" Nor take those nostrums which his pride prescribes.

L. 317. *His father works at a mechanic trade.*] I know the word τέκτων, as well as *faber* in the Latin, has a larger signification than our English carpenter; and some of the fathers were of opinion, that Joseph was *faber ferrarius*, a blacksmith, as he is called in the Hebrew gospel of St. Matthew; but the greater stream of writers suppose him to have been a carpenter: thus Justin-Martyr, who affirms, that our Lord himself did make ploughs and yokes; and indeed he is called τέκτων, St. Mark, vi. 3. and therefore, it may be presumed, actually wrought at his father's trade. Capernaum is about twelve miles distant from Nazareth.

L. 319. *His mean relations mingle with our tribes.*] These relations of our Lord, called his brethren in holy writ, according to the Jewish way of speech, seem to be no more than his cousins german, or sons of his mother's sister; for she that is called the mother of James and Joses, St. Mark, xv. 47. and xvi. 1. is styled Mary the wife of Cleophas and Jesus's Mother's sister, St. John, xix. 25.

" Will this self-taught usurper of the sky,
" His father, mother, and his friends deny?
" Or must we think, by some strange magic given,
" That all the family came down from heaven?"

" Our Lord replied—" If these you disbelieve,
" How will you truths still more sublime receive?
" Again I speak, attend to what I say:
" I came from heaven, and am to heaven the way.
" My body bleeds a sinless sacrifice;
" My flesh is bread; who eats it, never dies.
" My blood effus'd, my Godhead makes divine,
" Which flows in streams to answer God's design:
" Unless through these you happily obtain
" Eternal life, your hopes of bliss are vain.
" You seem amaz'd that I from heav'n came down,
" Without my glory, diadem, or crown;
" But scenes to come will greater wonder raise,
" When from my grave I reascend the skies,—
" When holy angels in my train you find,—
" A cloud my chariot, and my wings the wind.
" O hard of heart, perverse to understand
" What I reveal, or do what I command,
" Your carnal minds, immers'd in sensual love,
" Cleave to the earth, nor soar to things above:

" A mystic sense the words I speak convey,
" Which leads believers to eternal day."

" But no discourse could prejudice subdue,
Remove false doctrines, or impress the true.
The thoughtless crowd, with murmuring discontent
And strong displeasure, from the Saviour went.
With disappointment they forsook the shore,
In shoals as thick as when they came before.
The Saviour saw, but sorrow'd much to find
None but his twelve remain with him behind!
Then with those signs which kind compassions show,
Thus mildly question'd—" Will ye also go?"
Straight fervent Cephas, who could scarcely bear
So close a question, ask'd—" To whom, or where?
" Eternal life, dear Lord, we all implore;
" And this we find—and who can give us more?

L. 345. *A mystic sense the words I speak convey.*] St. John, vi. 63. " It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the words that I speak unto you, are Spirit," &c.

L. 347. *But no discourse could prejudice subdue.*] It seems plain, that the Jews understood our Saviour's words, " I am the bread of life," in a gross, carnal, literal sense: which mistake our Saviour endeavours to rectify; but they continued obstinate, and would not give him leave to understand his own words.

" We know thou must the true Messiah be,
" And all our hopes and souls repose on thee."
Again he said, while copious sorrows flow,
" I know you better than yourselves ye know;
" Your various failings I with tears survey,
" And mourn for him who will his Lord betray.
" His secret thoughts before my eyes are spread,
" Though veil'd by him in fancy's deepest shade.
" One of the twelve who stands before me here,
" And seems absorb'd in penitential prayer,
" Allur'd by bribes shall violate my laws,
" And act the traitor to the Saviour's cause,
" Perform the part I shudder to foretel,
" And move in concert with the prince of hell.
" Soon will the fiend become his dreadful guest,
" And fill with avarice all his guilty breast;

L. 366. *And mourn for him who will his Lord betray.*] John vi. 64. "Jesus knew from the beginning who should betray him." This was a wonderful instance of his humiliation and submission to the Divine will, that, in obedience to it, he chose such a person for one of his family, as he knew from the very first would prove a traitor.

L. 375. *Soon will the fiend become his dreadful guest.*] I take the word διάβολος here, one of you, namely, Judas, is a devil, in the largest sense, as it is used in the sacred writings, answerable to the Hebrew שָׂטָן, which signifies, as Dr. Hammond and Grotius remark, among other things,

" And when his deeds appear in public view,
" My death will prove the words I speak are true."

" Our conscious souls the accusation heard,
Each ey'd the next, and for his safety fear'd;
Yet no one spoke, or ask'd him to explain
Those awful words which fill'd each breast with pain;
But deeply treasur'd what we fear'd to view;
And sad events, we dread, will prove them true.

" But though I strive to tell the works he wrought,
The mighty sum exceeds my tongue and thought.
While in Capernaum's fruitful coast he stay'd,
Legions of devils his commands obey'd;
His hands the sick to health and strength restor'd;
The dead were rais'd by his Almighty word.
Remote and near his fame and virtues move,
And numbers trembled who disdain'd to love.

an Adversary *in foro*, a delator, an informer, an accuser, especially a false accuser; so here, διάβολος, says one, is as much as *qui deferet me apud principes*, one that will accuse me to the elders. But I understand it in a yet stronger sense: " He is a devil;" that is, our Saviour saw that he was already given up to the power of the evil spirit, who would fully enter into him, tempting him successfully to betray his Master.

When our great Lord a fit occasion saw,
He preach'd his gospel to explain the law;
Reveal'd new truths, and then sublimely tells
The schemes of Heaven in lively parables;
The great designs of prophecies imparts,
Or blames the hardness of his hearers' hearts;
The veil from scripture condescends to tear,
And shows the people what to love and fear.
Some facts remember'd may acceptance find,
And these when heard must speak for those behind.

"It happen'd once, returning from the feast,
Where Christ at Salem had become a guest,
He pass'd through Cana, where his power divine
The crystal water had transform'd to wine.
But while we here within its precincts stay'd,
And some provision for the future made,
A wealthy Lord from rich Capernaum came,
With haste and sorrow,—Chuza was his name.

L. 410. *With haste and sorrow,—Chuza was his name.*] Lightfoot, Walker, and others, think that the nobleman, St. John, iv. 46. whose son was sick at Capernaum, was no other than that Chuza the husband of Joanna, who ministered to our Saviour and his apostles, St. Luke, viii. 3.—which opinion I follow.

The rank he bore in haughty Herod's court,
Had rais'd him high in popular report:
He was by Herod his high steward made,
And upper Galilee his power obey'd.
He, in his youth, by pleasures' wiles debauch'd,
Embrac'd those doctrines the Herodians broach'd:
These, worse than Sadducees, or near the same,
Imagin'd virtue but an empty name;
Thought good and evil were the statesman's tools,
And heaven and hell but tales to frighten fools.
Hence all the sect voluptuously employ
Their thoughtless hours in lewd tumultuous joy;
Each some new pleasures every day contrives,
And all to wickedness devote their lives.

"Too long with these unhappy Chuza stay'd,
By numbers sanction'd, and by vice betray'd.
His conscience, lull'd by pleasure's flattering charms,
Slept too securely in her fatal arms;
But grace divine the dangerous cheat reveal'd,
And pointed out what passion had conceal'd.
His soul, alarm'd, espous'd fair virtue's cause,
And Chuza stood to advocate her laws.
But what, through grace, conspir'd this change to move,
Was fair Joanna and her virtuous love.

This lovely maiden had preserv'd her fame
In Herod's court, and lighted Chuza's flame:
An awe for virtue all her words inspir'd;
And such as yielded no assent, admir'd:
Her looks and modesty display'd a mien,
In *ancient courts* but rarely sought or seen.

" Her, in the crowd, admiring Chuza saw,
And felt the influence of esteem and awe.
Her condescension quite dethron'd his pride,
And chain'd those vices which had been his guide.
The seeds of grace, in this auspicious hour,
Came to his aid, and exercis'd their power;
Till strong like her's his growing virtues prov'd,
And admiration settled into love.
Determin'd hence to fix his choice for life,
He woo'd and won Joanna for his wife.
At her request his sacred prize he bore
From Herod's court and sin's enchanting shore;
And with Susanna, whose maternal care
Had train'd her mind to piety and prayer,
Found an asylum and a safe retreat
At his hereditary country seat.
They had not long in peace resided there,
Ere heaven in kindness bless'd them with an heir.

The smiling parents saw with heartfelt joy
The dawning virtues of their lovely boy.
But soon a fever's unrelenting rage
Their blasted hopes does in his death presage.
The frighted parents, robb'd of hope and ease,
Mark'd the sad progress of the stern disease;
Wept while he groan'd with unavailing grief,
But felt unable to impart relief.
Bent o'er his couch, the mournful mother stood,
And watch'd the pulses of his poison'd blood;—
Perceiv'd the tides in quick succession roll,
Which beat a march to his departing soul.
His tongue was morbid, and his breath was short,
And strong convulsions every limb distort;
Derang'd, he seizes every object near,
And all the marks of instant death appear.

"But while with tears they gave their son for lost,
They heard that on the Galilean coast
Their numerous friends had seen our blessed Lord,
And their last hopes confided in his word.

L. 476, &c. *They heard that on the Galilean coast*
Their numerous friends had seen our blessed Lord.]
St. John, iv. 43. "After two days, he departed thence (from the coasts of Samaria) and went into Galilee."

rong was their faith; his fame and power they knew,
nd each believ'd that Christ could all things do.
ıe anxious father left the dying bed,
nd quickly follow'd where his hopes had led;
hen drives his chariot in a race with death,
nd posts to Cana, or to Nazareth;
ıd vows, should he receive his son restor'd,
hat he and his would glorify the Lord.

" Near Jephthael's streams he found the friend he sought,
ıd his great message to a crisis brought.
ıw on the earth and prostrate he ador'd,
ıd health and vigour for his son implor'd.
ırist, who, remote, his earnest vow had heard,
serious trial for his faith prepar'd.
:t well he knows, when human bosoms bleed,
ow to sustain them in the time of need;
ıt here his patience and his faith he tried,
ıd his request nor granted nor denied.
ıen turning to the crowd his radiant face,
e thus exclaim'd—" O unbelieving race,

L. 487. *Near Jephthael's streams he found the friend he ght.*] A brook of that name in Galilee; the same, I nk, with Shihor-Libanus.

" How far shall infidelity proceed?
" How long will you these signs and wonders need?
" Must faith to sense continue to submit,
" Nor leave one moment for sincere regret?
" Must all these miracles which Heaven bestows
" Bring no convictions, while they gain applause?
" Like meteors shine amidst the gloom of night,
" And strike you blind with supernatural light."

" The father all with deep attention heard,
But full of fears this anxious prayer preferr'd:
" My case, dear Lord, admits of no delay,
" Nor can my son survive the present day:
" Before I came, I saw him gasp for breath,
" And faintly struggle in the pangs of death;
" If then thou canst departing life supply,
" Ascend my chariot, or my son must die."
Christ having heard, this simple answer gives,
" Retire in peace, thy darling offspring lives."
The joyous father from the Saviour went,
And to Capernaum his swift course he bent.
On his approach, to meet him at the gate,
Elate with joy officious servants wait,
Whose eager tongues the happy news impart
To ease the throbbings of the parent's heart;

Who, full of faith, had previously believ'd
The joyful tidings which he now receiv'd.
" Thy son," they cried, " is suddenly restor'd,
" And with his mother waits her absent Lord.
" For him we smile, for whom we lately mourn'd,
" And see his vigour and his health return'd."
The father ask'd with carefulness the hour
That interpos'd to check the fever's power?
" 'Twas on the seventh of yesterday," they said,
" That death departed, and the danger fled.
" Surpris'd we saw him then begin to mend,
" But through what cause we cannot comprehend."
" That was the time," the ravish'd father cries,
Lifting to Heav'n his grateful hands and eyes,
" Precisely then the great Messiah's word
" Declar'd my son was from the grave restor'd."

" These truths Joanna heard with tears of joy,
And in her hand led forth the smiling boy,
And safe and well to the pleas'd father shows:
The child, well pleas'd, his arms extended throws,
Welcom'd his sire, and innocently said,
" I have been ill, but am not sick or dead."
Great Chuza now, with gratitude and prayers,
To all his family his vow declares:

These freely grant he could perform no less;
And the Messiah, Jesus all confess.

" Soon after this, when Jesus further went,
(The blind and lame remember this event,)
Loquacious fame proclaim'd his march aloud,
While doors and streets display'd a motley crowd.
The dumb declar'd, the deaf receiv'd, his word,
And half dead patients smil'd, to health restor'd.
A touch, a look, their maladies remov'd,
And all his garments efficacious prov'd.

" Among this group of indigent and poor,
Who ask'd redress, and found or sought a cure,
A bold Centurion of the Roman band,
Inur'd to war, to take and give command,
Dispatch'd a proxy to relate his grief,
And then petition of our Lord relief:
For with his troops he at Capernaum lay,
To check the youths of factious Galilee.

L. 564. *To check the youths of factious Galilee.*] The Centurion being fixed in this place, there seems little doubt but that it was a station of the Romans, of whom there was need enough in that factious country of Galilee, whereof Capernaum was one of the most considerable places, if not the Metropolis.

The cause he taught his proxy to express
Was simply this, for which he sought redress:
" A faithful servant, whom he brought from Rome,
" Appear'd to wait for his impending doom.
" In various climes his faithfulness he found,
" On burning sands, and snows, and frozen ground;
" His arm with blood had dyed the hostile plains,
" And pois'd the spear in thirty hard campaigns.
" In fierce extremes his pulse had learn'd to beat,
" In winter's solstice and in summer's heat.
" But arduous toil and dread disease at length
" His bloom had wither'd, and absorb'd his strength;
" His nervous muscles cramps conspir'd to bend,
" And in a palsy bade his vigour end.
" Helpless for years the faithful veteran lay,
" A lump of half inanimated clay.
" Departing strength in all his limbs expir'd,
" And life to her last citadel retir'd.
" What art invented or what nature made,
" His friendly master ordered for his aid;
" But no assistance could assuage his pain,
" And arts were tried and sums were spent in vain.

" Among the rest Calirrhoe's baths were tried;
" But these the virtues they contain, denied.
" The king's Physician next espous'd his cause,
" But strove in vain to favour nature's laws.
" His helpless case the master's tears deplore,
" And much he sigh'd that he could do no more.
" A servant thus for faithfulness renown'd,
" His generous master a companion own'd:
" Valiant and true, in danger often tried,
" Nor gold nor fear could make him leave his side,
" In expeditions forward to obey,
" Nor would the secrets which he knew betray."

L. 587. *Among the rest Calirrhoe's baths were tried.*] Josephus describes these waters, both in his Antiq. lib. 8. cap. 17. and in Bell. Jud. lib. 7. cap. 25. He says, "They "arise about Machærus, from two springs of contrary "natures, one hot and sweet, the other cold and bitter; "which, meeting together, have many excellent virtues, "giving health, both by drinking and bathing, for several "diseases:" though Herod the Great tried them in vain by the advice of his Physicians, they being like to kill him, instead of curing him. These waters are so plentiful, that they not only run off, but make a fair current or river, on whose banks stood the ancient city Lasha, afterwards Calirrhoe, whence the baths themselves are named, being styled by Josephus, the baths of Calirrhoe, as our Tunbridge-Waters take their name from the town, though it is at a considerable distance from them.

" His master, finding human efforts vain,
" Sought for divine, for these alone remain.
" In this distress the Saviour's fame convey'd
" The wondrous tidings of the cures he made.
" The master rising with attention heard,
" And Israel's Monarch before all preferr'd.
" He lov'd the Jews, and their religion prais'd,
" And a small temple by his bounty rais'd.
" His servant now he hasten'd to convey
" To Christ, and him at Jesu's feet to lay.
" But soon he found him gasping hard for breath,
" And struggling in the agonies of death:
" He then resolv'd himself to Christ to go,
" But thought himself too worthless, mean, and low,
" Unfit to ask for blessings unprepar'd
" (A fact which proves he did not know the Lord:
" Since none by merit were prepar'd to stay,—
" None for humility were turn'd away)."

" Jairus the Saviour of the world implor'd
To have the servant of his friend restor'd;

L. 617. *Jairus the Saviour of the world implor'd.*] St. Luke vii. " The Centurion sent unto him the elders of the Jews." The rulers of their Synagogues were chosen out of the elders; one of these rulers was Jairus, with whom undoubtedly the Centurion was intimate, since he himself had built the Jews a Synagogue.

A train of friends supported his request,
And the same point importunately press'd.

" Soon as our Lord the circumstances heard,
He left the place, and to the house repair'd.
His kind designs the bold Centurion knew,
And much he wish'd, but fear'd, an interview.
He heard and said, " Such actions must not be,
" Such condescension is too great for me.
" My house, my heart, my household are too mean,
" A guest so great to lodge or entertain.
" But as my soldiers, when they hear my voice,
" Obey my word, and know no other choice;
" Attend observant on each secret sign,
" And yield their wills submissively to mine;
" So let Messiah, whose Almighty sway
" The laws of nature steadily obey,
" Declare his will, and at his sovereign word
" My worthy servant shall be quite restor'd."

" At this reply the Saviour, looking round,
Declar'd, such faith was not in Israel found.
" But Israel's sons," he said, " shall not alone
" Partake of glory and enjoy my throne.
" In every nation, those among mankind
" Who fear and love me with a holy mind,

" Shall find acceptance in the final hour,
" And feel deliverance from infernal power.
" For faith like this assumes a strong command,
" Which Heaven itself refuses to withstand:
" And while some sons of Abraham hope in vain,
" These shall in glory with the prophets reign.
" Go tell the Roman his request is seal'd,
" And his brave servant of the palsy heal'd."
He said—the servant instant strength receiv'd,
And the Centurion and his house believ'd.

" But vain were all my efforts to relate
What swarms he rescued from impending fate;—
How with a touch he Simon's mother rais'd,—
How him the joyful paralytic prais'd,
How Jairus' daughter was to life restor'd,
And quickly mov'd obedient to his word;—
What virtues issued from the robes he wore,—
What daring insults from the crowds he bore;—
What wondrous truths his tongue vouchsaf'd to tell
To her who met him close by Jacob's well,
What time he travell'd through Samaria's waste,
And bade her view the future and the past;—
How many, long of natural light bereav'd,
Their visual orbs and mental sight receiv'd.

The poor old man the joyful tidings heard,
And for a journey to our Lord prepar'd.
With trembling haste he cheerfully arose,
And near the gate his ragged garments throws.
His useless staff increasing faith supplies,
And hope rewards him for his loss of eyes.
Groping he walk'd, but stumbl'd in the way,
Nor for a guide amidst the crowd would stay.
At length arriv'd, our gracious Lord inquir'd
Why thus he spoke, and what he most desir'd.
" Lord, thou canst give," he with a sigh replied,
" Both eyes and light which Heaven has long denied."
" Thy faith victorious," Jesus straight rejoin'd,
" Display'd aright, is with my power combin'd.
" Give glory where 'tis due; receive thy sight,
" And plunge at once into a world of light."
Thus having said, immediately a skin,
Which shut the windows of his soul within,

L. 709. *The poor old man the joyful tidings heard.*] In the history thus, " Be of good comfort, for behold he calleth thee."

L. 725. *Thus having said, immediately a skin.*] I suppose it a sort of Cataract.

Fell from his eyes, and thus reliev'd his mind,
As mists or vapours vanish with the wind.
Low on the earth he gratefully ador'd
The sacred pow'r which spoke his sight restor'd—
Smil'd on the Saviour, and with language meet
Express'd his thanks, and prostrate kiss'd his feet.

"But time would fail, should I attempt to show
The various wonders you already know.
The blasted fig-tree you have often view'd,
And mark'd its vegetative power subdued.
Its wither'd branches thousands daily see
On the great road which leads to Bethany.
Of one born blind, perhaps, your ears have heard,
Who at Siloam had his sight restor'd.
The angry Sanhedrim this fact survey'd,
And by their actions serious fears betray'd;
Yet while they strove the wonder to disprove,
They spread the name of Him I wish to love.
At great Bethesda, fam'd for maim'd and poor,
He heal'd a man whom angels could not cure:

L. 739. *Of one born blind, perhaps, your ears have heard.*] He was born blind, and therefore his cure was such a miracle as was unanswerable after all the cavils of the Jews.

But, for this miracle his power had wrought,
His glorious life the Jewish elders sought.

" Too well (said Joseph) we their envy know,
" And mourn that virtue should create a foe.
" I well remember many truths he taught,
" And witness'd many miracles he wrought.
" I heard his voice amidst the hum of trade,
" And saw the changes in the temple made ;
" He view'd their sacrilege with eyes of pain,
" And drove the merchants from their seats of gain.
" I likewise saw him, when our elders brought
" The fair adult'ress, in the action caught ;
" I heard their questions, mark'd their base intent,
" And knew what all their captious language meant:
" But self-condemn'd these bold accusers went,
" And left the Saviour and the penitent.
" Yet fame alone enables me to know
" The fact your eyes at fair Bethesda saw ;
" And though I doubt not the report is true,
" I fain would learn the narrative from you."

L. 761. *But self-condemn'd these bold accusers went.*] St. John viii. 9. " Being convicted by their own consciences, they went out," &c.

" There is on fame's conspicuous lists enroll'd,
In Salem's market where the sheep are sold,
A famous pool, (the pious saint replied,)
Whose healing waters have been often tried;
Where those who suffer, speedy cures may find,
The deaf, the dumb, the wither'd, lame, and blind.
Here, when the morning sacrifice is made,
You know the power which all have seen display'd;
You know, from heaven some friendly angel brings
The gift of health on his celestial wings;
And he who first immerges in the pool,
Receives a cure, and stands completely whole.

" The man I mention'd, full of pains and fears,
Had felt disease for eight-and-thirty years:
His friends through pity brought him in his bed;
Which near the margin of the pool they laid:
But while he waited the auspicious hour,
And mourn'd his sufferings and his want of power,
He saw another step into his place,
And seize the miracle before his face.
Such disappointments always doom'd to bear,
Murder'd his hopes, and kept alive despair;
He felt his torments, nor could find relief,
But spent his moments in desponding grief.

The Saviour saw and mourn'd his deep distress,
And kindly ask'd him if he sought redress?
"In death," he said, with anguish and neglect,
"I hope for ease, but nothing more expect.
"Through friends the wealthy find a speedy cure,
"But most neglect, and some insult, the poor."
"Thy woes are past," the Son of God replies,
Infus'd a power, and then he said—"Arise."
His nerves grew strong, with health his visage glow'd;
His blood through long forgotten channels flow'd;
His blasted limbs their Maker's words obey;
He rose and walk'd, and took his couch away.
In every part the change his eyes perceiv'd
Appear'd too wonderful to be believ'd.

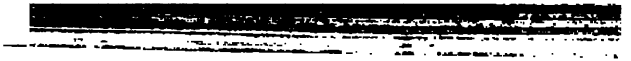
"Such crimes as these, for crimes to them they were,
Strangely provok'd the Sanhedrim to war.
The sabbath-day, on which the cure was wrought,
Furnish'd his foes with the pretence they sought;
And so far prejudice their minds engross'd,
That *in the day* the miracle was lost.
Yet while these actions prove he came from heav'n,
They also prove they need not be forgiven:

Those powers which either soul or body mend,
Must be divine, and cannot God offend.
All works of love, he publicly confess'd,
Broke not that day which God design'd for rest.
He blam'd traditions; but he blam'd them, where
With laws divine they clash and interfere.
He, full of meekness, merciful, and kind,
Obedience, faith, and law, and gospel join'd.
Compassion, alms, forgiveness he display'd,
And all the virtues tests of credence made.
Such proofs as these the Saviour sought and gave,
Who came his people from their sins to save.
Sometimes he spoke, and, like the seers of old,
These truths sublime in mystic figures told;
Then in plain language numerous crowds address'd,
And brought conviction to the guilty breast."
More might be said; but I begin to fear
Already I've too long detain'd you here.

L. 817. *He blam'd traditions; but he blam'd them, where.*] He says to his disciples, whatever the Pharisees command, that observe and do; that is, undoubtedly, in cases indifferent; since he was very severe against them, as in the business of Corban, where they made God's word of no effect by their own traditions.

Important lessons I could still recite,
Replete with wisdom, profit, and delight."

The speaker ceas'd: but what remains, all pray
To be indulg'd with on th' ensuing day.

END OF VOL. I.

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